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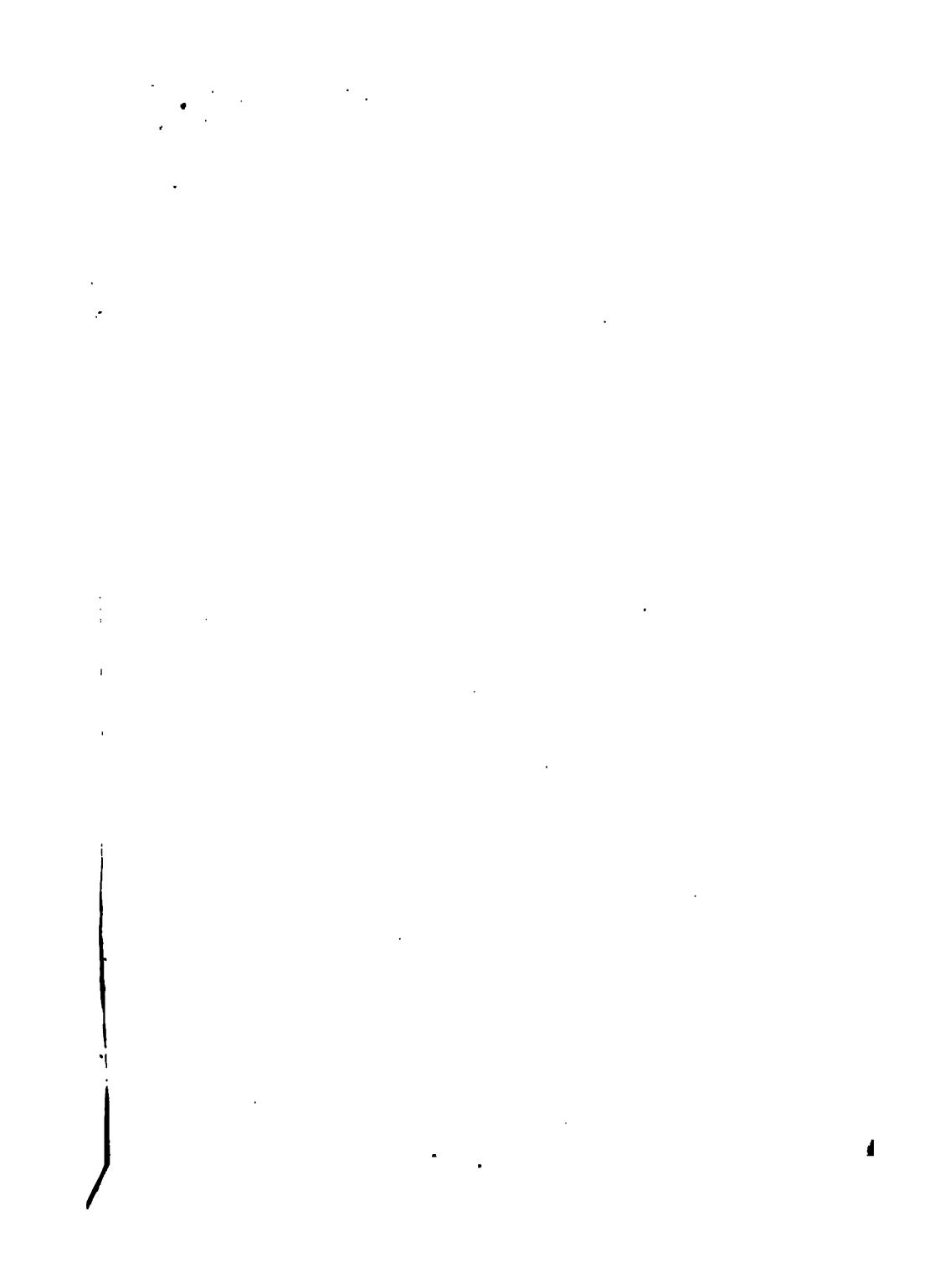
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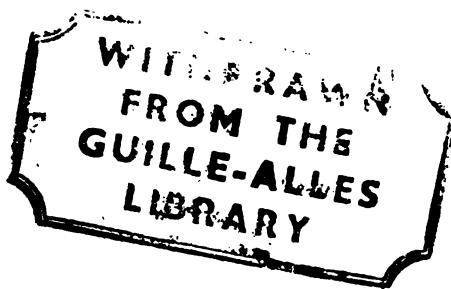
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LAWS OF THE COVENANTERS.







Portrait of
James Dodd, Jr.

LA Y S
OF
THE COVENANTERS,
BY
JAMES DODDS,

AUTHOR OF "THE FIFTY YEARS' STRUGGLE OF THE COVENANTERS;" AND
"THOMAS CHALMERS, A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY," ETC.

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THE
REV. JAMES DODDS,
DUNBAR.

*WITH PORTRAIT, ETCHED BY R. W. MACBETH
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.*

Edinburgh:
JOHN MACLAREN & SON.
1880.

ANSWER



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P R E F A C E.

THE length of the Memoir in this volume may seem disproportioned to the size of that part of it from which it derives its name. But the urgency of friends and the abundance of materials placed at my disposal have compelled me to lengthen out considerably what was originally intended to be a mere biographical sketch. Mr. Dodds's remarkable character and not uneventful life deserve a fuller portraiture than what is here presented ; but I hope no great injustice has been done to either of them in the following Memoir, which, though concise, may yet be found sufficiently comprehensive.

The Poems in this volume, published in two different magazines more than thirty years ago, were at one time partially revised by their author for publication in a separate form. They were greatly admired by many competent judges when they first appeared, and it is believed they will stand the test of impartial criticism at the present day. Had the author lived to revise them now, they would probably have further benefited by the last touches of his critical hand. He was a writer who loved more to condense than to expand the productions of his pen ; but few readers

of his “Lays of the Covenanters,” will wish that they had undergone any serious compression previous to their present appearance. While their poetical merits must be left to the judgment of the public, I may be permitted to say, with some confidence, that they breathe the very spirit of the Covenanting times, and do historic justice to a body of heroic men who, whatever faults may be imputed to them, were true to their conscience, and died in the cause of liberty.

Having undertaken to prepare the Memoir, and edit the Poems, at the request of Mr. Dodds’s family, I have received much valuable assistance from Mrs. Bontor, his eldest daughter. My best thanks are also due to various friends who have favoured me with letters of Mr. Dodds, and other biographic materials; especially to Dr. Charles Rogers, who, besides sending me some interesting personal reminiscences, kindly gave me the use of a number of volumes which I have found to be of great service in giving completeness to my narrative.

I am responsible for the Illustrative Notes at the end of the volume; with the exception of those relating to “The Aged Covenanter,” “The Christian Exile,” and “The Dove and the Ruin.” The Notes referring to these last were prefixed to them by the author when they first appeared.

J. D.

DUNBAR, *November, 1879.*

CONTENTS.

MEMOIR OF JAMES DODDS.

CHAPTER I.

Birth and Early Education. Youthful Characteristics. Life at the University. Erratic Courses. A Happy Return,	<i>PAGE</i> 1
---	------------------

CHAPTER II.

Schoolmaster at Sandyknowe. Humble but Honest Industry. Varying Moods of Mind. Bold Aspirations. Fine Literary Efforts,	24
---	----

CHAPTER III.

Lawyer's Clerk at Melrose. Oratory and Popular Politics. Hard Work and great Poverty. Dreams of going to the Bar. Sympathy and Advice of Mr. Carlyle,	37
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

A Lawyer's Clerk in Edinburgh. Early Struggles over. Struggles of another kind. Religious Convictions. Becomes acquainted with Mr. John Hunter. Lays of the Covenanters. Visit to Hume. His enjoyment of the Country,	51
---	----

CHAPTER V.

Removes to London. Parliamentary Solicitor. Professional Success. Great interest in Local Railways. Carlyle. Letters in the <i>Dumfries Courier</i> and the <i>Scotsman</i> . Leigh Hunt. Craigerrook Sonnets. Morgan Will Case. The Glen Tilt Case,	70
--	----

CHAPTER VI.

	PAGE
Visits to Galloway. Two Galloway Lairds. Lectures on the Covenanters and their Times. Rev. Dr. Rogers. Inauguration of the Guthrie Monument at Stirling. Public Breakfast in his Honour. Monument to the Wigtown Martyrs. Address at the Laying of the Foundation Stone. Wallace Monument Movement,	89

CHAPTER VII.

Scottish Literary Institute. Kossuth. Popular Lectures. Proposed Lectures on the Christian Evidences. Essay on "Scottish Lyrics and Scottish Life." Publication of "Fifty Years' Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters." Lectures on the Reformation Period of Scottish Church History,	106
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

Contributions to the "Oak." Life of Dr. Chalmers. Withdraws from General Society. Family Life. Scenes of his Holiday Recreations. Growing love of Nature. Overwork and failing Health. Closing Years and Last Days. Death and Burial at Dundee. Conclusion,	121
---	-----



LAYS OF THE COVENANTERS.

	PAGE
THE DEATH OF ARCHIBALD, FIRST MARQUIS OF ARGYLE,	145
THE DEATH OF JAMES GUTHRIE,	150
SHARPE OFFERING A BISHOPRIC TO ROBERT DOUGLAS,	157
THE CHRISTIAN EXILE,	159
BATTLE-SONG OF THE PENTLANDS,	164
THE AGED COVENANTER,	169
THE BATTLE OF AIRSMOSS,	174
CARGILL TAKEN PRISONER AT COVINGTON MILL, ON THE CLYDE,	181
RENWICK IN THE COTTAGE OF JOHN BROWN OF PRIESTHILL,	185
RENWICK'S VISIT TO THE DEATH-BED OF PEDEN,	200
PEDEN'S SHROUD,	213
TRIAL AND DEATH OF ROBERT BAILLIE OF JERVIESWOODE,	214
THE MARTYR OF PRIESTHILL,	221
MEETING OF GENERAL DALZIEL AND CAPTAIN JOHN PATON OF MEADOW- HEAD,	240
THE DOVE AND THE RUIN,	246
JOHN KNOX ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT AT CALDER HOUSE,	249
ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES,	255



MEMOIR OF JAMES DODDS.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY EDUCATION. YOUTHFUL CHARACTERISTICS. LIFE AT THE UNIVERSITY. ERRATIC COURSES. A HAPPY RETURN.

JAMES DODDS, the author of the following poems and of other writings of undoubted merit, was born on the 6th of February, 1813, at Softlaw, in the parish of Sprouston, near Kelso. Having lost his father when he was a mere child, his early training was left to his mother, a warm-hearted and excellent woman, who had soon reason to rejoice in the opening powers and promising character of her son. But the person who exercised most influence on his youth, and whom he always regarded with unbounded veneration, was his grandfather, under whose roof he and his mother lived during his earliest years. That venerable relative, after whom he was named, was indeed one of the finest conceivable specimens of a class of worthies in humble

life for which Scotland was once famous. He was a man of singular piety and gravity of character, of great intelligence, and gentleness of disposition. He had a love of reading, and a taste for wholesome religious literature, which greatly added to his mental stores, and gave him a high authority among his neighbours. He was a member of the Secession Church in its best, or at least its most primitive days, and took a deep interest in all matters that concerned the spiritual improvement of the nation, and the spread of the Gospel in heathen lands. In spiritual intelligence and mental development he was far in advance of his neighbours. He was among the first in his own district, indeed among the first in Scotland, who subscribed to the "London Missionary Society," that great Institution which so materially helped to inaugurate in this country the era of missions. Old James Dodds believed that the Society would be "a liberator and regenerator of a benighted world, of all degraded humanity." He took in the *Evangelical Magazine* and delighted in the fresh missionary intelligence and wholesome spiritual food it provided, month after month, for its numerous readers on both sides of the Border. His grandson always delighted to speak of him "as a grand old man, a veritable patriarch, an Abraham among his people," who, though born in humble life, was well educated and intelligent, a deep thinker on the great social and political events of his day, and as remarkable for his unfailing good sense

as for his fervent piety." He was gifted with a rich fancy, and addicted to solitary meditation on the hill-side, in the calm of the twilight, or amidst the blast of the midnight storm. He was a saint on earth and an oracle among his fellows. He made a deep impression upon all who even casually met with him in this world; and his grandson, who grew up in his presence for years, learned to look upon him with a reverence that almost became a passion. Till his dying day James Dodds spoke of "his grandsire old" with a depth of feeling which often moved him to tears.

The youth, thus trained at the side of such a saintly character, soon displayed a measure of intelligence that excited the admiration of all his companions. Little is recorded of the first schools he attended, but it is certain that he displayed in his earliest years a wonderful aptitude for learning, and a precocity of talent quite extraordinary. He made verses, and recited sermons in the hearing of his companions, when he was quite a child. His imagination, fired by old ballads and border tales, suddenly acquired great power, and lifted him into an ideal world. He would often gallop about from place to place on an imaginary steed, and then astonish the rustic minds of the people around him by thrilling narratives of battles with wild beasts and encounters with savage men. These marvellous creations of his child-brain were for the time as real to him as life itself. At other times he would gather round him a.

miscellaneous audience to listen to his harangues or sermons on scriptural subjects, modelled, for the most part, after the discourses he heard from the pulpit. Yet what struck many of his more intelligent hearers was not the liveliness of his fancy, but the maturity of his understanding. The wonder of the sages of the hamlet was that one so young could speak on subjects so important with the gravity and sobriety that belong to riper years.

Before he was much above thirteen years of age he had read and mastered many of the works of Dr. Johnson, and, what is more remarkable still, had grappled with Bishop Warburton's "Divine Legation of Moses." And so thoroughly did he enter into the spirit of these great writers that he actually, in his youthful enthusiasm, admired their very faults. Their dogmatism and arrogance he would often, more in earnest than in jest, praise and even imitate. The educated persons he became acquainted with were often amused to hear the rustic but precocious youth talk in the pompous language of Johnson, argue sometimes in his playful, sometimes in his surly style, and lay down the law most dogmatically on some difficult question. Warburton's controversial arrogance seemed to be a high merit in his eyes, and he enthusiastically praised the argument of the Divine Legation, splendid paradox as it is now admitted to be. But these fits of admiration and imitation he afterwards regarded as the intellectual frolics of his youth, the ebulli-

tions of a mind that wanted the firm guidance of some accomplished preceptor. Indeed, looking back to his early days, he often described himself as self-willed, passionate, and proud, apt to assert his independence in an extravagant way, to rebel against salutary restraint, and even to indulge in the language of sarcasm, which is so unbecoming in the mouth of the young. These strange characteristics of his youth, however, were accompanied with singular warmth and generosity of heart, which gained him friends and conciliated enemies.

When about eight years of age he was sent to live with an uncle and aunt in the parish of Mertoun, for the sake of attending a school at which he might be prepared for the University of Edinburgh. The parochial schoolmaster, a Mr. Penny, was an original in his way, but a man of considerable acquirements, and able to teach more than the elements of Latin and Greek. He was in the habit of making his more intelligent pupils read in turn passages from any newspaper that had fallen into his hands in those days of limited political knowledge. As one piece of news after another was read the old pedagogue uttered sundry significant exclamations, or offered some pungent criticisms. In this way he "taught the young idea how to shoot," and strove to implant in the minds of his pupils germs of serious and fruitful thought.

But when he was about eleven years of age the young

scholar ran away from Mertoun in a fit of passion, or possessed by a strong spirit of adventure. Instead of returning to the house of his grandfather, who had, some years before, removed to Muserig, two miles from Kelso, he made his way to Edinburgh, in order, as he said, “to see the world.” In one of his letters, written late in life, he thus speaks of this adventure:—“I had a vague idea of living by my pen, and carried away in my flight a quantity of poems, and a history of the world, by which I expected to get riches to live upon, and immortal fame after death.” He was traced to Edinburgh, and brought back to live with his grandfather, who, while other relatives rated him severely, kindly forgave his youthful folly, and overcame him by the power of kindness.

But notwithstanding this strange escapade, James Dodds gradually won for himself many admiring friends, and attracted the attention of several influential persons who were able to assist him in his early difficulties. Mr. Innes, the factor of the Duke of Roxburgh, on whose estate his grandfather lived, actually made arrangements for sending him to the University of Edinburgh. This gentleman acted from first to last in this matter with considerate kindness.

The Rev. W. Kell, Episcopal minister at Kelso, an excellent scholar, and well disposed to befriend humble merit, was another true friend of the youth; so also was his son, William, a young man of fine parts, and the most amiable disposition. Between William Kell and James Dodds there

sprang up thus early a friendship of the warmest kind ; it was like that of David and Jonathan, beautiful and true on both sides. But young Kell's career, which was full of promise, was soon cut short. His was one of those delicate characters that open like lovely flowers to the world for a brief season, and then suddenly pass away.

It may here be mentioned that James Dodds, from his boyhood, attended, with his grandfather and mother, the ministry of the Rev. Robert Hall, of the Secession Church, Kelso, and brother of the better known Dr. James Hall, of Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh. Mr. Hall was an able man and an excellent preacher, but eccentric in his habits, and possessed of a somewhat imperious and choleric temper. His eccentricities both in and out of the pulpit were tolerated by his large and attached congregation out of respect to his fidelity as a preacher and pastor. But he was quite a spiritual hero in the eyes of his young hearer from Muserig, who admired his vigorous sermons and enthusiastically extolled his very oddities and extravagances. The native humour of the youth, and his keen sympathy with all that he thought *genuine* in character had probably more to do in producing such overflowing admiration than either sound judgment or a just knowledge of human nature.

In November, 1828, the Muserig scholar proceeded to Edinburgh, in order to commence his studies at the University. He had made no choice of any profession, though doubtless

his mother and other relatives hoped he would study for the ministry of the Secession Church. His grandfather was now dead, and he missed the blessing of the noble old man when he left his home. He was, in many respects, better furnished for the initiatory classes of the University than most country students of his day. His knowledge of Latin and Greek was considerable, and the amount of his literary information was quite uncommon in one so young. But in regard to other matters he was remarkably deficient. He wanted method and system in the prosecution of his studies. His fierce spirit of independence and his dislike of restraint also made him ready to quarrel with the professors and his best friends. These faults of his fiery youth he soon came to see in their true light, and he never ceased to lament them as long as he lived.

At this period began my personal acquaintance with the subject of this memoir. We were cousins, and, though we had never met before, we had carried on for years an epistolary correspondence. Lodging together during the winter session, we had abundant opportunities of studying each other's characters, tempers, and literary attainments. I soon found that, though somewhat younger than myself, he was decidedly in advance of me in various regions of thought. His knowledge of books and literature seemed to me quite beyond his years. He was evidently, also, not one of those precocious youths who grow up into commonplace

characters, but a lad of remarkable ability and a robust habit of mind. I soon found that he could be petulant enough when heated by argument; but I also found that he was essentially kindly and good-natured. In the warmth of his heart he was ever ready to forgive and forget all blows given and received in controversy or debate. At the outset of his career, as well as in his later days, I was always struck with the child-like simplicity that gave a peculiar charm to his character.

In the University we only met in the second Latin class. He was a fair Latin scholar, but somehow he did not vigorously apply himself to his classic studies, and soon incurred the censure of Professor Pillans. That professor, though a good scholar, and an excellent teacher, was a little fussy and fidgety in conducting the business of his class, and occasionally displayed qualities which a youth like my cousin was sure to regard with dislike, and even contempt. The consequence was that he soon became a sort of marked man in the class, as he took little pains to conceal the spirit of rebellion that harboured in his heart. The professor was right in the main, and the refractory student well deserved the sharp admonitions which he occasionally received. He afterwards deeply regretted "the boyish petulance of his student days," and though he once bitterly said to me that "Pillans would be nothing if he were not a Latin scholar," he lived to acknowledge the personal worth and public

services of that distinguished Latinist and educational reformer.

With Mr. Wallace, the Professor of Mathematics, one of whose classes he attended, my cousin was greatly delighted. That eminent mathematician was a man of great simplicity and genial wit. He often seasoned his instructions with quaint sayings, and commended himself to his students by the child-like frankness of his character. James Dodds was just the person to relish immensely the good or odd things said by the worthy old mathematical Scotchman, and often at night he read to me out of his note-book, not statements or solutions of geometrical problems, but the racy remarks or humorous allusions of his favourite professor. He showed a keen appreciation of the class of characters to which Wallace belonged, and too exclusively applauded what was simple, odd, or old-fashioned in the men he met with in life. In his reckless student days he certainly gave way too much to likes and dislikes that were inspired more by capricious feeling than sober conviction. I often had occasion to condemn both his transient ebullitions of resentment and his regular quarrels; but I never found in him any trace of malice or ungenerous feeling. Want of knowledge of the world, a naturally warm temper, and an exaggerated sense of independence accounted for most of those juvenile explosions which brought him into much trouble, and afterwards filled him with an almost excessive remorse.

I persuaded him to join with me a debating society, composed chiefly of Dumfriesshire and Galloway students. He soon took a leading part in the debates, and manifested an oratorical talent which quite astonished his fellow-members. At one bound he became, I may say, the first debater in the society. He seemed to have found there the proper arena for the exercise of his powers, which were eminently those of a public speaker. He had a ready command of ideas and illustrations which he clothed on the spot in vigorous and pointed language. He showed little or nothing of the mere schoolboy disclaimer, though he was not yet sixteen years of age. On the contrary, his acuteness and reasoning powers were as extraordinary as his fluency and vigour of speech. His chief fault was his want of calmness and self-command. A proneness to sarcasm, sometimes of a personal kind, and an occasional ferocity of spirit, must also be numbered among his infirmities. But his genius for oratory was immediately recognised by all who heard him speak. Dr. Wilson, late of Dundee, now of Edinburgh, who knew the young debater when first he tried his powers, says of him, that "his eloquence was quite unique, and far surpassed that of any other student of his day."

His chief antagonist in debate was John Anderson, who, in after-life, went to Madras as a Christian missionary, and nobly distinguished himself on the mission-field. Anderson had been at least a year a member of the society before my

cousin joined it, and had taken a prominent part in its debates. He was a man of an ardent temper, of a ready wit, and a very clever speaker. He was extremely fond of argument, and always entered the lists of controversy with peculiar zest. He was a good deal older than my cousin, and naturally felt some chagrin when he found himself boldly confronted by the juvenile aspirant. At first the two debaters regarded each other with some dislike and jealousy, when they took opposite sides, as they generally did, in argument. Anderson had previously been foremost in the fight, and the new comer was determined to brook no superior, and even to win the oratorical crown if possible. Yet they soon came to know each other well, and to esteem each other highly. They had indeed much in common, and could warmly sympathise with each other as they talked of their early struggles, and gave vent to their generous aspirations. They never met as members of the debating society after that winter of 1828-9; but in the following summer, and for some time after, they had not a little personal intercourse, which they mutually enjoyed.

Eighteen years after, when the Rev. John Anderson was enjoying a needed season of rest in Scotland, he spoke to me with great tenderness of feeling about James Dodds, whom he had never forgotten amidst his absorbing missionary toils in India. He was pleased to hear of his quiet settlement in London, and to find that some fears regarding his lot in life

had been disappointed. He spoke warmly and generously of his old antagonist and friend. And when the devoted missionary, worn out with incessant cares and toils, died at Madras in 1855, his old rival received the sad intelligence of his death with feelings of affectionate sorrow, which he beautifully expressed in a letter to me, part of which I here quote:—

“ You rightly appreciate the feeling that sprang up between Anderson and me. From young, fierce, teeth-gnashing athletes, we became respectful acquaintances, and then for many a day attached companions. At the time when you were not in Edinburgh we were constantly together; my lodgings in Arthur Street were his ‘ howff,’ and there, over potations of coffee, we laid down laws to the universe. Though brisk and satirical, he was in reality a mild creature. In this he far surpassed and differed from me; for though I was capable of great devotion to a friend, I was then also passionate, turbulent, and insolent to a degree which now amazes me. He was peculiarly gentle with me; and that period has left upon me the impression that he was anxious to soften me, and infuse into me a blander spirit of friendliness. At all events, I have very distinct and tranquillising dreams of that period; and it is refreshing to know that his impressions at that period were something like my own. There was in him real mildness and loving-kindness; and I can easily see by what Divine process that sharp, ringing, cutting tongue only became the organ of an energetic, penetrating, invincible,

and holy benevolence. I loved to hear of his career. I have often in snatches heard of it. Death after such a life is stript of all terror and gloom. Such a man only enters into peace, walking in his uprightness. I weep at the strange exciting recollections of his youthful course and mine at the points where they blended ; but I cannot weep over such a grave as his, such a blessed and delightful resting-place. The picture you have drawn of him living in the Lord and dying to the Lord, will remain ineffaceably, and, I hope, profitably, traced on my mind."

I am bound to say that my cousin, when I first knew him, was too much of a hero-worshipper. The Rev. Robert Hall was his first hero, and even after he had gone to college his boyish admiration of the eccentric old Seceder minister existed in full force. Mr. Hall's odd sayings and doings, his simplicity, piety, and pomposity, are fresh in the recollection of the few surviving members of his flock at this day. But what others looked upon as singular and even blame-worthy in his manner of acting and speaking, his youthful admirer lauded to the skies. I have heard that admirer hold forth for hours on the intellectual strength and sturdy moral qualities of Mr. Hall, whom he regarded with a sort of humorous but deep and genuine affection. Most people failed to see in his idol any surpassing merits, but it must be allowed that the old Seceder was, in the best sense, "a true man," as well as a vigorous though somewhat antique preacher of the Gospel.

Among the political heroes of the student's early life Henry Brougham long held the foremost place. His admiration for Brougham amounted to a passion when I first knew him; but in time it quite subsided within the limits of truth and sobriety. With his native love of intellectual power and lofty eloquence, he was also the man to estimate highly the genius of Chalmers. I well remember the efforts he made to get into the Edinburgh Assembly Room when a meeting was held in it to support the cause of Roman Catholic emancipation, and at which Dr. Chalmers was to speak. He heard the great orator with unbounded delight, and enthusiastically described to me, on his return from the meeting, the effect of that eloquence, which had taken the whole audience by storm. He has admirably described the whole scene in the Assembly Room in his excellent "Life of Dr. Chalmers." That great orator and philanthropist he admired and venerated to the last, as the truest of our modern Christian heroes.

During his brief college career he also got acquainted with the celebrated Dr. Andrew Thomson, minister of St. George's Church, Edinburgh. He heard Dr. Thomson's famous speech on the abolition of negro slavery, a speech which rose to the very height of eloquence, and thrilled the whole heart of the country. Everything in the shape of high and impassioned oratory had for him an irresistible attraction, and nothing could keep him back from a meeting

where eminent public speakers were to be heard. In his young days, and till he was well advanced in life, he believed that his true vocation was that of a public speaker; and he often yearned for an opportunity of exercising in some conspicuous sphere that gift of eloquence of which he was sometimes painfully conscious.

Dr. Robert Gordon, of the High Church, Edinburgh, was another minister whom my cousin greatly admired. He regularly attended his church during the college session, and highly appreciated his grave and noble sermons. Dr. Gordon had a fine presence and an air of great solemnity in the pulpit. But he was a close reasoner and a powerful expounder of evangelical doctrine, rather than a fervent or imaginative orator. Yet he was one of the most effective preachers of his day, while both his private and public life were eminently spotless and dignified. I thought it a good sign of the wayward and somewhat unmanageable student that he held Dr. Gordon in great reverence, and steadily attended his ministry. As having been brought up in the Secession Church, he occasionally went to hear Dr. John Brown, long a shining light of that Communion; but the minister of the High Church was the man he preferred to every other ornament of the Edinburgh pulpit.

At the conclusion of the college session he remained in town, and endeavoured to support himself by private teaching. Failing in the attempt, he soon began to feel

the pinchings of poverty, and, sorely against his will, he applied to his patron for assistance. But his letters were not acknowledged, and he was afterwards led to believe that they had been wilfully intercepted by some clerk or underling of the factor. Whether his suspicions were well-founded or not, he at last received from Mr. Innes a letter full of sharp remonstrance and rebuke, extremely likely to wound to the quick his fiery spirit. The consequence was just what those who knew him could have easily predicted. He could not defend himself, for he had been going on in a reckless manner, frequenting the theatre, courting the society of actors, and altogether forgetting the prudence that was expected of one in his position. But he felt that he was in many respects unjustly and cruelly assailed by one who, instead of demanding explanations from himself, had listened to the interested accusations of secret enemies. He therefore fired up in a grand explosive style, hurling wrath and defiance at his offended patron, and renouncing all future dependence upon him for support.

But if, like a wild colt, he thus rushed into the desert of independence, he soon found that it is not given to young men to be so independent as they would wish. Youth is naturally dependent on the counsel and active help of age; and a premature assertion of independence, even when it is not a mere piece of bravado, is seldom distinguishable from downright rashness and folly. The truth of this was

afterwards fully acknowledged by him who thus madly bolted from the course which had been prescribed for him by those who really wished him well. The unhappy student made desperate efforts to get a few pupils, but met with no success. Having searched Edinburgh in vain by night and day, he had at last to give up his attempt. His resources were soon exhausted, and poverty in its direst form at last stared him in the face. Driven to the necessity of leaving Edinburgh, he determined to walk to England, and there seek his fortune. When he set out on his journey he had just eighteenpence in his pocket; but on leaving town, he fell in with a young lad from his own part of the country, who, on learning the low state of his funds, insisted on giving him other eighteenpence, which was all he had in his pocket. This fine display of youthful generosity he never forgot, and could seldom speak of without tears.

The hardships of his journey to the south are not to be described. His three shillings were soon gone, and he became familiar with the pangs of hunger. With all his book-learning he knew wonderfully little of the world, and failed to lay out his little stock of money to advantage. He actually began with ordering breakfast at a roadside inn, for which he was charged just the half of the pittance he possessed. But by way of making amends for this piece of extravagance, he changed the remaining one-and-sixpence into pennies, which he spent one by one in the purchase of

bread. At last, footsore, weary, and utterly destitute, he arrived at Newcastle.

Having acquired in Edinburgh a strong taste for the stage, he went as soon as he was able to the Newcastle theatre, and asked to see the manager, in the hope of being employed by him in some capacity or other. That personage received him much more kindly than might have been expected, and actually offered him a share of his own untasted dinner, cautioning him, at the same time, to eat slowly at first, lest after his long fast he should do himself harm. Suspecting at once that his strange guest was a runaway from some family or school, he advised him strongly not to think of the stage, but to return at once to his friends. But finding the youth bent on a trial of theatrical life, he told him that, though he could not himself give him employment, he would recommend him to a strolling company then in the town. Obliged by hunger, as well as by a craving of another kind, the student accepted the position that was soon placed within his reach, and entered on a new line of life, that of a strolling player.

Though his heart was often heavy, and his future was all dark before him, he became the low comedian of the company. He had at the time an exuberant fund of humour of a somewhat rollicking character, and it is not to be wondered at that he sang in many a barn comic songs with voice and gesticulations provocative of immense laughter and applause.

But while thus doing the work of an actor, after his own fashion, he made himself useful as the scholar of the company, and wrote play-bills, posters, and advertisements with no little literary skill. He was even employed in touching up old, and composing new pieces. But all the time he was in a state little above destitution. The proceeds of the performances were so small, or his share of them so humble, that he hardly obtained daily bread and the commonest necessities of life.

For nine months he thus lived, or rather starved, among the players who strolled about the north of England in the exercise of their unprofitable calling. His abandonment of this strange life was brought about in an unexpected manner. It happened that the company had been performing in a considerable town, and had been so much more successful than usual that the low comedian had been able to take respectable lodgings for himself, and thus to escape company at night which had not been always agreeable. Being told by his landlady that the Rev. Mr. Kell, of Kelso, and Mrs. Kell were lodging in the town, he resolved, after a severe struggle with his pride, to call on his former friends. He met with a kind reception from them both, and was induced by Mrs. Kell to tell her the secret of the life he was leading. Nothing could exceed the tact and kindness of this excellent lady in dealing with the erratic genius on that occasion. She knew that he had grievously offended all his friends and

well-wishers, and lay open to the charge of rebellion and ingratitude. But, without using a single word to provoke within him a spirit of defiance, she fairly melted him by her motherly gentleness, and persuaded him to give up at once the miserable line of life he had been following. To this lady and her equally generous husband belongs the credit of rescuing from danger and impending ruin a youth of fine parts, who was evidently born for work of the highest kind. They had the penetration to see through the extravagances and eccentricities which for the moment had overlaid the better features of his character; and they had the Christian charity to perform an act of deliverance which many would have considered equally undeserved and useless.

It must not be supposed that James Dodds, during this extraordinary period of his life, was guilty of any vicious excess or vulgar dissipation. He was naturally and by habit a sober youth. He had a great repugnance to intoxication and all its evils. He had become about this time, it is true, a lover of tobacco; but his pipe, modestly and not excessively indulged in, was almost his only luxury. Even in his lowest fortunes he never lost the moral and religious feelings of his youth. It must be confessed, however, that the players among whom he lived for a time, though a kindly, good-natured set, were by no means models of purity; and he witnessed among them scenes which he ever afterwards strove to banish from his memory. The force of

the untoward circumstances in which he was involved, partly by his own misconduct, his sudden and almost unaccountable passion for the stage, wounded pride, and the very extravagance of a wayward temper, were the causes that combined to drive him from Edinburgh, and make him plunge into the wide world in quest of adventures, and of daily bread. Nobody saw more clearly, or lamented more keenly than himself the pride and folly that marked this period of his life. He often looked back upon it as a strange and troubled dream, wondering how he could have been led into it, and thanking God that he had been brought out of it in such a remarkable way.

It would appear that the admirable woman who, under God, rescued him from a miserable life, did not limit her benevolence to a single act of interposition. She had more of the Good Samaritan in her heart than thus to stop short in her work of mercy. She took the rescued wanderer to her own home, introduced him to the amenities of a refined Christian life, attended to his personal comforts, and treated him as if he had been her own prodigal son, restored to his father's house. Under her fostering care, and softened by her disinterested affection, the youth came to himself, and was soon, as he afterwards used to say, sitting at the feet of his benefactress, "clothed, and in his right mind."

It is of this lady that he evidently speaks in his preface

to the Sermons of the Rev. Robert Hall, of Kelso, which he afterwards edited. After stating that he owed to her his final reconciliation with his venerable pastor, he adds : "Should my name ever chance to be known, this shall be known also, that, in the hour of deepest adversity, when all men stood aloof from me, she stepped boldly forward, rescued me from misery, restored my health, perhaps my life, and certainly my character ; placed me in her own family, and made me hope for better days. And better days I now see ; but I never cease to thank her, and Heaven shall reward her for these acts of a most excellent and rare charity. I could not refrain from saying this much, and they who know matters will be surprised that I could say so little." It is not every one who, even in the writer's circumstances, and with some portion of his gifts, could have penned such a tender and manly acknowledgment as this.



CHAPTER II.

SCHOOLMASTER AT SANDYKNOWE. HUMBLE BUT HONEST INDUSTRY.
VARYING MOODS OF MIND. BOLD ASPIRATIONS. FINE LITERARY EFFORTS.

FOR some little time after his restoration to the proper haunts of men, James Dodds enjoyed peace and rest in his former home, and among friends, who received him back with kindness. Through the good offices of Mrs. Kell, he was reconciled to his old minister, Mr. Hall, whose wrath had been inflamed against him by various accounts of his conduct, some true, and some false. The affection thus renewed between the aged minister and the young member of his flock was of the warmest character, and was only terminated by death. But reconciliations and restored friendships could only prepare the way for settling down to honest labour, however humble. Accordingly, like many a Scottish youth who has risen from poverty to a good, or even eminent position in the world, James Dodds betook himself to the teaching of a humble country school. He did not reach, or perhaps aim at, the position of a parochial schoolmaster, an

important personage in those days. An assistantship in a superior school, or a tutorship in a gentleman's family, even had either of these posts been within his reach, would probably not have suited his very independent spirit. As matters stood, he accepted the situation of teacher of a small adventure-school at a farm-place, in the parish of Smailholm, six miles north-west from Kelso.

That farm-place was Sandyknowe, celebrated in connection with the early life of Sir Walter Scott. Nearly sixty years before, that child of genius had spent the opening dawn of his life, or, as he has himself informed us, "awoke to the first consciousness of existence," at Sandyknowe, near which stands Smailholm's ruined tower, now immortalised in his song. That farm belonged to Walter Scott's paternal grandfather, but it had in former times been the property of a distinguished Border family, the Pringles of Whytbank. Brought out of Edinburgh, a lame and somewhat sickly child, for the benefit of the pure country air, the future great minstrel of the Border had his young imagination excited by the most romantic scenery in the Lowlands of Scotland. Lying at the foot, or perched on the summit of Smailholm Tower, when yet a mere child emerging out of helpless infancy, he could gaze on a landscape rich in natural beauty, and studded over with hills, and towers, and famous spots rendered classic by the deathless power of poetry. In his introduction to the third canto of *Marmion*

the minstrel thus sings of Smailholm's ancient border keep:—

“ Then rise those crags, that mountain tower,
Which charmed my fancy's wakening hour.
It was a barren scene and wild
Where naked cliffs were rudeley piled ;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green.
And well the lonely infant knew
Recesses where the wallflower grew,
And honeysuckle loved to crawl
Up the low crag and ruined wall.”

Almost beneath the shadow of Smailholm Tower, James Dodds opened his rustic school, and began a career of steady labour and manly industry from which he never afterwards deviated. His chief supporter was Mr. James Stewart, the tenant of Sandyknowe farm, which then belonged to the estate of Mr. Scott, of Harden, the grandfather of the present Lord Polwarth. Mr. Stewart was a very worthy man, a Seceder of the old school, and much respected by all his neighbours. In his house the young schoolmaster resided, at least during the schooldays of the week, and found himself treated like one of the family. To Mr. Stewart's children this was an advantageous arrangement. For nearly four years did the youthful schoolmaster occupy this humble position ; and though fit for something far higher, he cheerfully went through a round of toil that many lads like himself would have found most irksome.

Not confining the attention of his more promising pupils to books, slates, paper, and such instruments of learning, he often took them out, in the spring and summer evenings, to the fields, the hills, and woods, and taught them precious lessons from the book of Nature. With the more advanced and intelligent of them he entered into lively conversation about the different objects that lay at their feet, or formed the chief beauty of the landscape. He knew well that if he taught them how to observe and name a plant or flower, how to watch the habits of birds and beasts and insects, how to love and be kind to all God's creatures, he was greatly adding to their sum of useful knowledge, and enlarging their capacity of innocent pleasure. His own intense love of Nature was richly gratified by these out-of-door excursions, seldom paralleled in the annals of an obscure country school.

I remember once visiting him at Sandyknowe, on my way home to Dumfriesshire, at the close of a college session at Edinburgh. I found him in excellent spirits, and quite content, in the meantime, with his humble circumstances, but full of grand aspirations in regard to the future. In conversation, his natural humour overflowed, and there was no end to his power of literary allusion. He seemed quite at home with the Stewarts, and he had already acquired a high character in the neighbourhood as a painstaking teacher. From Mrs. Stewart I received a most interesting account of Sir Walter Scott's last visit to Sandyknowe.

The great novelist was on the eve of his departure for the Continent in the hope of some recruitment of his shattered energies. Along with Turner the painter, his son-in-law Lockhart, and his old friend Mr. Skene, he visited in one day of September, 1831, a number of places dear to his childhood. Sandyknowe was the first scene that he sought, the dearest of them all. While Turner was sketching the castle and its romantic environments, Sir Walter and the rest of his party went into the farm-house, and were hospitably received by the "gudewife." He was deeply affected, and could not restrain his tears as he spoke of his childhood's days spent at Sandyknowe. I cannot recall the words he used on the occasion as reported to me by Mrs. Stewart, but they were such as flowed from a heart full of sadness, yet touched with the kindliest and homeliest feeling. It has always struck me that the basis of Sir Walter Scott's character was the homeliness and shrewdness of an old-fashioned Scottish laird or farmer. Even the marvellous genius with which he was gifted never in the least obliterated those plain but sterling qualities which made him such a true man, and such a favourite with the humblest as well as the highest classes of his countrymen.

From our earliest years, my cousin and I corresponded by letter, and the correspondence, especially on his part, was often of a very enthusiastic character. His letters were very extraordinary productions, full of eloquence and passion,

intermingled with wit, humour, and literary aspirations. Up to this period of his life, and till he had reached mature middle age, his letters to me, if not so numerous as I often wished, were always remarkable as compositions. Indeed, I know of nothing in private correspondence like them for original sentiment and forcible expression. Should they ever see the light, they would occupy a unique place in epistolary literature. They were, to a large extent, the impassioned outpourings of an imaginative and aspiring mind; intensely subjective, yet never egotistical; full of lofty flights of fancy, yet also full of deep reflection and sober thought. Their autobiographical value is great; yet in a sketch like this they can find no place.

The years passed at Sandyknowe formed for James Dodds a period of needful and fruitful repose. He gained a bare subsistence by his toil, but he was by no means unhappy. In literary attempts, and in occasional intercourse with youthful friends, he found his purest pleasures. The following passage of a letter dated November, 1833, speaks of his innocent happiness, and of the joy he had experienced in the company of his friend William Kell:—

“ This last summer I have spent as merry as a grasshopper. Mr. William Kell has been down the whole season. To his company I may apply the eulogium pronounced on Plato’s feast, ‘ not only delightful at the time, but also leaving a delightful relish behind it.’ He finishes his studies for the

English Church this winter, and somewhere in the month of January or February he begins his race for a mitre. He is a man whom it is impossible not to love for his talents and his estimable qualities."

But he did not always write in this blithesome mood. Even at this quietest period of his life he was often visited with sad misgivings, "blank imaginings," and the soaring aspirations of young ambition. He had long felt that he possessed the fire and passion of an orator; and his early desire was to make his way to the Bar, where he thought he might exercise with most effect his power of doing good in the world. As illustrative of the mood into which he often fell, and the grand dreams inspired by his young ambition, I quote the following passage from a letter he wrote some time after his Sandyknowe life :—

" It would be affected modesty in me to deny that I do believe I have a capacity for forensic and active life. My ambition is to drink deep at the well-spring of abstract truth, and then, by dint of unwearied diligence, practical steps, and what persuasion I can use, to direct little fertilising streamlets of secular reformation and improvement through the valleys and by the waysides chiefly of my native land. The discipline through which I have passed has been harsh, but wholesome. It is true, I have been lashed with scorpions; poverty, calamity, dejection, misused powers, misspent opportunities, and hopes blasted ere half opened, and physical suffering, down

even to the most pinching pangs of hunger, have been as familiar to me as the winds of heaven. For years my youth has been but the revolutions of the impaling wheel. But what of that ? The marks of torture are printed on my soul, never to be effaced. But brighter, I may say holier, characters have there also been engraved, deep, deep sympathy for all the sons and daughters of adversity, and all the hapless victims of oppression. Were you to know me now as intimately as you once did, you would scarcely recognise me. Many of the outward appearances are the same, the ready, boisterous laugh, the bursts of frolic glee, the explosions of temporary violence. But all within is changed. There seems ever in my ear a voice, saying, ' Watch ! canst thou trifle away a moment of the lifetime allotted to thee, or any of the talents that have fallen to thy share, while so many of thy fellow-men are sunk in ignorance, crime, poverty, and slavery ? ' Oh ! this is no day-dream, no illusion. It is the absorbing, restless, ruling principle of my life, a fate whose eyes are ever on me, a spirit whose touch I ever feel, like live coals from the altar. Not for myself do I live, not for self do I struggle ; but I have been born to war with oppression, whether it be under legal forms or public policy ; and my only resting-place shall be the grave."

But though impetuous thoughts and resolves thus often agitated his mind at Sandyknowe, he never got disgusted with solid and undemonstrative work. While he regularly

taught his village school, he engaged in his first literary venture, the preparation for the press of a number of the Rev. Robert Hall's sermons. Mr. Hall died in 1831, and some members of his flock encouraged the project of printing, in a modest volume, a few of his sermons. James Dodds was the very man to edit such a volume, and to prefix to its contents a biographical sketch of the author. Accordingly, he undertook with all his heart a task which in a large measure was self-imposed. The manuscripts of the best of Mr. Hall's sermons had unfortunately been destroyed before the volume was talked of, and the editor had to pick out as he best could from a confused mass of ill-arranged and half-legible papers the materials of his projected publication. With incredible pains and labour he deciphered and put in order the eight sermons which he considered sufficient, with preface, dedication, and biographical sketch, to form a tolerable memorial volume.

The "editor's advertisement," or preface, was in excellent taste, as the extract from it already given is sufficient to show; but as much cannot be said of a lengthened and laboured Dedication of the book to Lord Brougham. Anything more extravagant and stilted in style than that production of his pen can hardly be conceived. It is full of noble thought and generous aspirations, but its high-flown language, and most artificial and involved sentences entirely spoil the effect of the whole composition. It seems to show

how a young writer of great ability may only make himself look ridiculous by an elaborate attempt to be striking and powerful. Few men of his years could have written it; but the few who could have equalled it in vigorous thought would probably have avoided its strained and exaggerated style.

The biographical sketch of Mr. Hall, prefixed to the sermons, is in much better taste, and indicates no ordinary power of analysis. While evidently regarding the deceased minister with a biographer's partiality, the editor performs his task with considerable discrimination. The following extract from the portrait of Mr. Hall is given as interesting in itself, and a fair specimen of the author's manner:—

“Mr. Hall was of a tall, commanding stature, noble aspect, muscular and majestic deportment; and though from slovenliness and irritable temper his countenance had early lost its beauty, yet his form retained its majesty. He was of a large and robust make, his face rough and sanguine, the expression in his features austere and fiery, his walk erect and dignified, his whole appearance eccentric, but solid and imposing. He might have been seen a few days before his death, though in his seventy-fourth year, pacing the streets with a deportment so lofty, a step so elastic and firm, as to preclude the suspicion that a few revolving hours would see him reduced to stiffness and a corpse.”

The book, published by subscription, had little more than a local circulation, though it really deserved a wider publicity. The editor was only in his twentieth year, and had given evidence of no ordinary literary powers. It is not known whether Lord Brougham acknowledged in any way the elaborate compliments paid him in the Dedication; but the writer of that remarkable effusion seems to have retained, for at least a considerable time, his high admiration of the Lord Chancellor, then in the height of his power and fame. He even went to the trouble and expense of attending the Grey Festival held at Edinburgh, in 1834, to express the gratitude of Scotland to Lord Grey, who had recently retired from the Premiership of the Government which had carried the Reform Bill. That festival had all the dimensions of a national demonstration, and helped to excite the flickering flames of Liberal enthusiasm. It was attended by Lords Brougham and Durham, and other political celebrities, who took a prominent part in the proceedings. James Dodds had thus an opportunity of seeing and hearing a man "whose example," as he had said in his Dedication, "had been from boyhood his pole-star and delight." In a letter to me, within a few months after the festival, he simply says, "I thought extraordinarily of the Chancellor, though his speech was but meagre; yet I picked up from him some valuable lessons in elocution." These words show at once that his admiration for Brougham had become more discriminating,

and that he was always looking forward to public speaking as his chosen means of doing good, and making a figure in life.

During the years that he taught his school at Sandyknowe, not the unhappiest of his life, though spent in poverty and obscurity, he regarded as his home the house of his uncle, James Dodds, with whom his widowed mother resided. In that humble house at Muserig he usually lived from the Saturday of each week till the following Monday, when he walked back to Sandyknowe to resume his work. He also spent his annual vacations with his uncle and mother. His Uncle James, at that time unmarried, was a father to him in every respect, and treated him with unwearyed kindness. He was a man who greatly resembled his own father, "the Abraham among his people," the Christian sage of a great mind and a large heart, whose memory deserves to be enshrined in a more enduring record than this brief and imperfect memoir.

Not discouraged by the limited success of his first literary venture, James Dodds projected a little monthly periodical, to be published at Kelso, under the name of *The Border Beacon*. The prospectus, written by himself, in the usual flaming style of such productions, bears the date of August, 1835, and the magazine appeared in the following October. In the said prospectus the band of young aspirants who had leagued together to set the Tweed on fire at Kelso are made

to say:—"We are anxious to be well acquainted with Ettrick, to shake hands with Teviotdale, to be peculiarly linked in the bands of confraternity with Eskdale, to be affectionately regarded in Liddesdale, to be taken under the wing by the Merse, and in fine, to be solicited even on the remote shores of Berwick-on-Tweed." The local allusions couched in these words may have been clever once, but they are only obscure now. Yet, though the ingenious kindlers of the *Beacon* "claimed the support of the wise and enlightened around them," they met with such inadequate encouragement that in five months their watch-fire was extinguished. The little monthly contained some excellent papers, and was sold at threepence, "to suit all classes," as the prospectus had gently put it; but there was plainly no scope for such a publication in a small county town and a thinly-peopled district. It served, however, to exercise the promising talents, and indicate the ardent aspirations of a few young men who aimed at edifying and amusing their neighbours without counting the cost of their literary experiment. One of the most active and able of these adventurers was Mr. William Brockie, who loved James Dodds through life, and still survives to venerate his memory.

CHAPTER III.

LAWYER'S CLERK AT MELROSE. ORATORY AND POPULAR POLITICS. HARD WORK AND GREAT POVERTY. DREAMS OF GOING TO THE BAR. SYMPATHY AND ADVICE OF MR. CARLYLE.

HAVING made up his mind that the profession of the law would best suit his talents and his aims in life, James Dodds left Sandyknowe in March, 1836, and bound himself apprentice for five years to Mr. Scott, a writer or solicitor, residing at Abbotsmeadow, in the immediate vicinity of Melrose. As an apprentice or clerk of a country legal practitioner he passed the next five years of his life, and went through a vast amount of ill-remunerated toil which he never looked back upon with any satisfaction. He applied himself, however, with remarkable industry to the endless copying of dry law papers, and the mastering of the principles and details of Scotch law. That he was diligent in doing his work, and wrought hard for his master, with his head as well as with his hand, is well known to many who became acquainted with him at this period of his life. Indeed, it was impossible for him to rest satisfied with the

mere mechanical drudgery of a law-clerk. His keen and active intellect soon grappled with the legal principles involved in such cases as Mr. Scott had to conduct in the Sheriff Court, or had otherwise to manage for his clients. Long before the term of his engagement had expired, he was employed by his master to write important law papers, or pleadings, for the Court, as if he were himself a regular legal practitioner. He once sent me a specimen of his compositions of this description, and I remember reading it with no small amazement at the knowledge, acuteness, and eloquence it displayed. Mr. Scott had certainly an excellent bargain in his clerk, but failed to remunerate his services in a decent, not to say liberal, manner. I forbear to mention the paltry yearly salary he paid a young man who served him as few could have done, and whose claims upon his justice and charity were of the highest kind.

While Mr. Dodds was thus toiling at the oar in a country writer's office, he forgot not the claims of literature, and was also drawn into the turmoil of provincial politics. He read the English classic authors, especially Shakespeare, with great avidity, and even made them the subjects of critical study. He actually prepared and delivered lectures on a number of Shakespeare's plays and leading characters, illustrating them with appropriate recitations, which added greatly to their popular effect. His audiences often consisted chiefly of plain country people, who knew little of

Shakespeare but what he told them in his own dramatic style. "It was amazing," says Mr. Brockie, "to see how he fascinated the douce old wives of Gattonside by his Shakespearian recitations. Many who had never read a play in their lives, and who would not for the world have crossed the threshold of a theatre, went to hear Mr. Dodds recite and comment night after night, and always came away delighted, as well as instructed." It appears, indeed, that the ardent lecturer and reciter contemplated at this time the preparation of a series of studies on Shakespeare for publication in some magazine. His purpose, perhaps never seriously formed, soon passed from his mind; and, meanwhile, literature with him gradually gave way to politics.

At this period the agitation excited by the great Reform movement of 1831-32 was still strong in Scotland, a country which had just been awakened to a new political life. On the Scottish Border, and in such towns as Galashiels, Hawick, and Jedburgh, political feeling ran high, and Liberalism was in the ascendant. The young clerk, budding into a lawyer, and aiming at public life, joined with all his heart the Liberal party, and soon distinguished himself as a speaker at political meetings. He was by education and conviction a Scottish Whig of a pronounced character; but, like a true Whig of that class, he never adopted subversive principles, and always advocated the cause of progress and reform

within the lines of the British Constitution. In what are now called the Border Burghs, which, since their enfranchisement, have been represented by a distinguished Liberal, the nephew and biographer of Lord Macaulay, Mr. Dodds won no small reputation as an eloquent champion of popular rights. On various exciting occasions he swayed the multitude by his bold denunciation of oppression and advocacy of liberty. He sympathised always deeply and sincerely with the working classes, and often described his chief mission in the world to be the defence of their rights. Accordingly, when he spoke in public he never failed to strike a responsive chord in the poor man's heart, and to cheer him with the hope of better days. His popularity in the burghs was as great as it was honestly acquired. It was never sought for from unworthy motives, and it never served to alleviate the deep poverty in which his life at this time was passed. He was one of the most generous and disinterested of popular champions. From first to last he acted from the purest aims, and showed a noble superiority to the money power.

Many stories are still told of his wonderful activity in advocating the popular cause at this period. Often on a winter evening he left his lodging about eight o'clock, drove many miles to a public meeting, spoke for an hour or two, so as to enthrall all hearts, and then returned through the cold and darkness to his humble home, where he arrived about

two or three in the morning, and was ready by nine to take his place at the office desk. Not only plain country people, but the most highly educated and the best informed of his audiences were led captive by his eloquence. A lofty aim always inspired his oratory, and moral reform was still dearer to him than any measures of a merely political kind. He had an enthusiastic love of liberty, and could kindle a corresponding flame in the hearts of all who heard him ; but he knew the value of religion, and religion with him meant Christianity. To all who knew him at this period of his life it was a subject of regret that he was not enabled to occupy some sphere worthy of his extraordinary powers. But dark adversity continued to pursue him ; and he who for years was the most brilliant orator on the Border was living all the time in a state of absolute indigence.

In some of his letters written during the Abbotsmeadow period of his life, he playfully alludes to the employments and weaknesses of a country writer. He speaks in one place of the Courts breaking up for a week or two about Christmas, and his thus "getting a little breathing space from quibbles." In another he says, "almost every passion is now scourged and mortified out of my withered frame but hopes of obtaining 'decree,' fears of being exposed to the dreadful scrutiny of a just count and reckoning, and a grinning satisfaction on being appointed by some rich old maid, in her last will and disposition, to the management of her trust-estate for behoof

of all the legatees, which I contrive in due time to translate into for behoof of *myself*." By this time, as has been seen, he had begun to take a very serious view of life, and was often visited by desponding thoughts; yet, like all men of his stamp, he often indulged in a hearty laugh on looking at the humorous side of things. But humour is one of the balsams of the mind, one of the essential oils that help to give a pleasant flavour to life, and to make the human machine go with a tolerable smoothness.

In a letter written at the beginning of 1840, when the fourth year of his apprenticeship was about to terminate, he speaks of the Scottish Bar being the goal of his ambition, and then goes on to mention some of his encouragements in regard to that matter. "As a friend," he says, "unbosoming my own experiences, not as a crackling boaster, I am happy to tell you that among a wide circle of shrewd, observant men, and amongst the whole body of the population, my own 'many-headed darling,' I enjoy a degree of esteem, confidence, and influence which cannot easily be matched, especially when it is considered how giddy and unsettled my early days were. Do not misunderstand this effusion. If I know myself, it is not vanity. But you have often pressed me for a bit of neighbourly chit-chat in my letters, and that is the dose I am now administering.

"Meanwhile, owing to the miserable smallness of my salary I have had to live in the greatest poverty, and even

my dauntless heart would have sunk but for the cheering confidence and affection of the people around me. If the shepherd in Virgil knew what love was, and that he was born on the hard, flinty rocks, much more may I say the same of poverty. Little wonder, then, that all mind, soul, and strength has been gathered up into one object, to be in all things the advocate of the poor. For all my life the peasantry and honest artisans have been my best friends; but chiefly of late years have they been dear to my heart. Over all this district, from the forest to where the Tweed laves the English soil, the hinds of Ettrick and Teviotdale, and the laborious reflective weavers on the Slitrig and the Gala own me for a common brother. In their lowly cots, and in the bosom of their lovely families have I spent all the little leisure I have had; and thence returning, in the vigils of sober but earnest meditation, have I brooded, and patiently matured my thoughts, and nursed the resolves which the Angel of Mercy whispered in my ear. There may be much of earthly ambition in all this; but I deny vanity in the matter. I forswear all sinister ends. He who shall be my Judge knoweth that, if there be, as there is, much of the human clay of ambition in these schemes, it is an ambition to make the peasantry of Scotland the glory and noblest spectacle of all lands."

About a month after this letter reached me, I received in another a long, impassioned account of himself, his views

and aspirations, wound up with a touching reference to his narrow circumstances, and the depressing effects of his almost despairing struggle for existence. He also hinted that he might, if he had only the opportunity, be able to eke out his means of livelihood by contributing literary articles to one of the London periodicals. He mentioned that he had recently made a complete study of Shakespeare, and could probably produce an original article or two on that well-worn theme. It occurred to me to forward his letter to Mr. Carlyle, along with a brief explanatory statement, in the hope that the great writer might, with his customary benevolence, take an interest in the prospects of the struggling and aspiring youth. This I did without the knowledge of that youth or any of his friends on the Border. In due course, I received from Mr. Carlyle the following kind and characteristic reply, which now for the first time sees the light. As it is alike honourable to the illustrious author and the object of his kindly interest, I need make no apology for giving it to the public :—

5 CHEYNE ROW, CHELSEA,
LONDON, 5th February, 1840.

DEAR SIR,—It would surely be a duty and a luxury to help a young man struggling in such difficulties, outward and inward, as those of your cousin. Unfortunately, however, there seems nothing, or very little beyond barren

sympathy and wishes, that I could offer in the way of help. A man is not so easily *helped*; the help that would avail such a man as your cousin seems to be must come from within rather than from without.

As to this project of writing for the periodical press, I must say, in the first place, that there is yet no evidence of your cousin's having acquired a faculty to write what would be successful or useful there. Then, secondly, my concern with that department of things was always in the utmost degree *exoteric*, and for a good many years back has altogether ceased; so that any furtherance of mine could advance him but a little way, if at all. And then, alas! thirdly, that it is doubtful to me whether the highest conceivable "success" in that course might not be for your cousin an *evil* in place of a blessing. I speak advisedly in this matter. There is no madder section of human business now weltering under the sun than that of periodical literature in England at this day. The meagrest bread-and-water wages at any honest, steady occupation, I should say, are preferable for a young man, especially for an ambitious, excitable young man. I mistake much if your cousin were not wise to stick steadfastly by his law and what benefits it will yield him; studying, of course, in all ways, to perfect and cultivate himself, but leaving all literary glory, &c. &c., to lie in the distance, an obscure possibility of the future, which he might attain perhaps, but also could do very well

without attaining. In another year, it seems, his official salary may be expected to increase into something tolerable; he has his mother and loved ones within reach; he has, or by diligence can borrow and have, some books worth reading; his own free heart is within him, to shape into humble wisdom, or mar into violent madness; God's great sky is over him, God's green, peaceable earth around him. I really know not that he ought to be in haste to quit such arrangements.

Nevertheless, if he persist in the purpose to write, which, in my ignorance of the details of his situation I know not that he should absolutely avoid doing, let him by all means try it. If he turn out to have the fit talent, he will decidedly find an editor; if not, it is better in all ways that he do not find one. I will, with great readiness, forward his paper to the proprietor of *Fraser's Magazine*, who is my bookseller, and have it looked at. I would offer it to any other editor whom your cousin might suggest, provided I knew such editor; but except Mr. Tait of Edinburgh, whom I did once know, I can think of no other much worth applying to, if, indeed, these be worth it! They will make short work of the business, and answer truly, "This thing seems *fit* for *us*; this thing seems not fit!" That is all they will answer.

In conclusion, I should say that your cousin ought decidedly to try for some other subject to start with than

criticism on Shakespeare. Doubtless *he* must know best what he has the call to write upon, if he have really an *inward* call. But the thing he will have the chance to write entertainingly upon will be something *he* specially himself has seen, not probably Shakespeare, I should say, which all the world these two centuries has been doing its best to see. Excuse this abruptness. Heaven knows I would gladly help your cousin, if I could. $\tau\lambda\hat{\gamma}\tau\epsilon\phi\lambda\omega!$ For the present I subscribe myself yours truly,

T. CARLYLE.

Soon after the receipt of this letter, another reached me from Mr. Carlyle, enclosing for my cousin a note of introduction to the Rev. Dr. Aitken, minister of Minto, a very accomplished man, who was in easy circumstances, and possessed a good library. The philosopher thought it likely enough that Mr. Dodds might easily call on Dr. Aitken, as Minto is at no great distance from Melrose ; and that the cultured and kindly minister might be of real service to one who so greatly needed and deserved help. This friendly office brought the young clerk and Dr. Aitken together, and led to a lasting friendship between them. But in the course of the same year there arose a friendly correspondence between that clerk and Mr. Carlyle himself. With great pains and wisdom did Mr. Carlyle endeavour to encourage his youthful correspondent, and guide him along a safe

practical path. The following letter speaks for itself, though the ardent effusion to which it is evidently a reply, cannot now be produced :—

LONDON, 21st September, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,—The truthful genial temper manifested in your letter cannot but increase the interest I felt in you. It will be good news in all time coming to learn that such a life as yours unfolds itself according to its promise, and *becomes* in some tolerable degree what it is capable of being. The problem is your own, to make or to mar; a great problem for you, as the like is for every man born into this world.

You have my entire sympathy in your denunciation of the “explosive” character. It is frequent in these times; and deplorable wherever met with. Explosions are ever wasteful, woeful; central fire should not explode itself, but lie silent, far down, at the centre, and make all good fruits grow. We cannot too often repeat to ourselves, “strength is seen not in spasms, but in stout bearing of burdens.”

You can take comfort in the meanwhile, if you need it, by the experience of all wise men, that a right heavy burden is precisely the thing wanted for a young strong man. Grievous to be borne; but bear it well; you will find it one day to have been verily blessed. “I would not for any money,” says the brave Jean Paul in his quaint way, “have



had money in my youth." He speaks a truth there, singular as it may seem to many.

By the way, do you read German? It would be well worth your while to learn it; and not impossible, not even difficult, even where you are, if you so resolved. These young obscure years ought to be incessantly employed in gaining knowledge of things worth knowing, especially of heroic human souls worth knowing; and you may believe me, the obscurer such years are, it is apt to be the better. Books are needed, but yet not many books; a few well read. An open, true, patient, and valiant soul is needed; that is the one thing needful.

I have no time here, in this immeasurable treadmill of a place, to answer letters. But you may take it for a new fact, that if you can, as you say, write *without* answer, your letters shall be altogether welcome! If at any time a definite service can be done by answering, doubt not I shall make time for it. I subscribe myself, in great haste, yours, with true wishes and hopes,

T. CARLYLE.

Before I wrote to Mr. Carlyle, my cousin had read his "French Revolution," and had formed a very high opinion of its merits. A vigorous and genial criticism of that masterpiece from his pen came under the eye of the philosopher, and naturally served to deepen his interest in its author. The consequence was, that when Mr. Dodds

went to reside in London six years afterwards, he enjoyed the coveted advantage of friendly intercourse with Mr. Carlyle. As one of a favoured circle, he went to his house on his reception evenings, and listened with admiration to his sage-like and powerful utterances on men and things. He once told me that he had heard from Mr. Carlyle's lips the substance of many of the "Latter-Day Pamphlets," a good while before they were published. Though never a professed imitator of Mr. Carlyle's style and manner, he was, like many other literary young men of the day, powerfully influenced by the searching and earnest spirit that pervades all his writings.



CHAPTER IV.

A LAWYER'S CLERK IN EDINBURGH. EARLY STRUGGLES OVER. STRUGGLES OF ANOTHER KIND. RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS. BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH MR. JOHN HUNTER. LAYS OF THE COVENANTERS. VISIT TO HUMBIE. HIS ENJOYMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

IN 1841, soon after the expiry of his apprenticeship at Abbotsmeadow, Mr. Dodds went to Edinburgh in order in push his way in his profession. Mr. Scott, on parting with him, bore testimony to "the faithful, honest, and becoming manner in which he had performed his duties," and expressed an earnest hope "that his talents, qualifications, and disinterested singleness of heart might conduce to his success in life." The young lawyer soon found employment in the office of Mr. Maurice Lothian, a gentleman well known in the legal circles of Edinburgh. He enjoyed the benefit of the recommendations of the Rev. Dr. Aitken and other Roxburghshire friends interested in his success, and possessing some influence with the Liberal party. Mr. Lothian, who still survives, remembers well the arrival in town of young Mr. Dodds from Melrose, and the good impression

he made on every one by his character and ability. He also states that at the time "he was sure the genius of the lad would not long submit to the drudgery of a clerk." But Mr. Dodds, from his first commencement of work in Edinburgh, was determined to shrink from no drudgery that might commend him to his employers, and serve to plant his foot firmly on the ladder of promotion.

His affairs, after he came to Edinburgh, began materially to improve, and he was able gradually to clear off the debt he had been absolutely obliged to contract in Melrose. I occasionally saw him at this period, and continued to correspond with him in the old confidential manner. I found him generally in excellent spirits, and enjoyed greatly the vivacity of his conversation. But underneath the outward show of humorous glee and intellectual enjoyment, there lay a deep vein of seriousness, and even of melancholy, which escaped the notice of the ordinary observer, and only appeared in various letters addressed to myself. To show something of his inner life at this time, I venture to quote a passage from one of these letters:—"15th Sept., 1841.—Although all outward things wear a sufficiently smiling appearance, yet I have never had darker moments within since I came here. This arises entirely from inward causes. It is the revolution that has long been going on in my nature come to the last agonising crisis. I have fought in my own way 'with wild beasts at Ephesus.' I have

fought with poverty, pride, calamity, wild passions as ever wrung any poor heart, scepticism, total darkness, and bewilderment and disbelief. I have nearly boxed the whole compass of torturing experiences that the soul can be subjected to ; and now, with broken trembling heart, I pray to God that this weary warfare may end. Methinks, I begin dimly to discern the far-off beams of His ancient throne. O ! may the wings of time, and the breezes of true in-felt humility soon bring me to the full light of life. But I see His hand in all. My nature is interwoven with all the darkest passions that man can inherit ; and it has been His good pleasure to burn out these foul corrupting taints by passing me, soul and spirit, through the furnace of suffering, mental suffering chiefly, and much of outward also."

About this period, or shortly before it, his mind got greatly unsettled as to the ground and evidence of Christian truth. Even after he was thoroughly persuaded that Christianity was true, he was perplexed for a time with doubts about the respective claims of the Protestant Churches and the Church of Rome. Determined to take nothing upon trust, and to satisfy his mind in regard to all such matters by independent inquiry, he began to study with great earnestness the standing controversy between Protestants and Romanists. While pursuing his studies in this field, he became acquainted with Dr. Gillis, at that time the Roman Catholic Bishop of Edinburgh, an accomplished man, and a

very acute controversialist. The Bishop had many conversations with him, argued with him in the most winning manner, and lent him many books on his side of the great questions in dispute. Some of Mr. Dodds's friends, who were cognisant of his conferences with a man who had won not a few converts to Rome, began to entertain apprehensions as to the result. They feared that his poetic, imaginative, and impulsive temperament might be powerfully wrought upon by the imposing claims and outward grandeur of Rome. But all fears as to his Protestantism soon passed away ; and after this crisis of his spiritual life was over, he was more satisfied than ever with the great doctrines of Evangelical Christianity. But even when his mind was tossing on a sea of religious doubt, he kept steadily in view the great object he had set before himself, which may, in general terms, be said to be his advancement in life by means of the Law. In a letter to his early friend, Mr. Brockie, written about this period, he says :—"I have remarked, and probably so have you, that while, at first, the world keeps back a young fellow, and thinks less of him than he deserves, through its excessive jealousy ; on the other hand, it pushes him on, and exalts him as much beyond what he deserves, the moment he has secured its good graces by talent, diligence, and steadiness. We who have nothing but our wits to live by, may comfort one other with these words. But this one thing we must all remem-



ber, that no genius, no surpassing talents, no wit, no charming social powers, even no excellence of character, will enable us to make real, permanent progress in life, without that lord-paramount of all earthly qualities, *steadiness*, dogged, unflagging steadiness. This quality, small, coarse, and unadorned as the acorn, is the one, after all, which gives strength, magnitude, perseverance, and grandeur to the character, and roots it fast and massive as the oak."

It may here be stated that before he went to Edinburgh Mr. Dodds was married to Miss Janet Pringle, with whom he had become acquainted at Abbotsmeadow, and who, though considerably younger than himself, turned out to be the very wife he needed to promote his comfort and happiness. His marriage was thought by some of his friends to be hasty and improvident, but it was, in the end, the source of the purest domestic happiness. Mrs. Dodds, during the whole period of her wedded life, entirely sympathised with her husband, attended wisely to his household affairs, and even assisted him in his literary undertakings. Her instinctive taste and judgment were greatly deferred to by her husband as he penned his poems and prepared his lectures. When she condemned, he was more than doubtful of the merit of his compositions; when she approved, he was satisfied that he had produced something that would stand the test. As a wife, a friend, and the mother of his children, she was nearly all to him that a woman can be to a man;

and she has survived him to cherish his memory, and to take an intelligent interest in the preparation of this faithful, though imperfect, record of his life and labours.

After spending some time in Mr. Lothian's office, where he was always treated with marked kindness, Mr. Dodds entered the service of Mr. George Rutherford, W.S., 84 Great King Street, another respectable legal practitioner of that day. While he was a clerk in Mr. Rutherford's office he was invited by Mr. John Gordon to meet at his house Mr. Carlyle and other literary friends. How he was struck with Mr. Carlyle cannot now be exactly ascertained ; but his admiration of the author of the "French Revolution," was almost unbounded, and, doubtless, suffered no diminution on this occasion. He met, however, another gentleman in Mr. Gordon's house who became the best and most useful of all his friends. This was the late Mr. John Hunter, a man of high eminence in his profession, and who held for many years the responsible situation of Auditor of the Court of Session. Born in the academic atmosphere of St. Andrews, and connected by marriage with Lord Jeffrey, Mr. Hunter had a decided taste for literature which, even in the midst of the toils of an engrossing profession, he always found time to cultivate. His hospitable house at Craigmoray, where Lord Jeffrey had long resided, was for many years the resort of literary men connected with Edinburgh. This accomplished gentleman was greatly impressed with the intellectual powers

of James Dodds from the moment he met him, and, before parting with him at Mr. Gordon's, he cordially invited him to call at his office as soon as he could make it convenient. Through an awkward modesty that often led him into practical mistakes, Mr. Dodds neglected to call on his new friend in terms of the invitation; but Mr. Hunter some time after, having encountered and stopped him on the street, insisted on the interview he had desired. This led to an engagement which laid the foundation of Mr. Dodds's future career as a professional man. He left Mr. Rutherford's service to enter the office of Messrs. Lockhart, Hunter, & Whitehead, the eminent legal firm of which Mr. Hunter was a leading partner. Mr. Hunter from the first treated his young friend with considerate kindness, highly appreciating his legal attainments, as well as his literary talents, and planned for him some professional career which in good time might suit his aims in life. From Mr. Whitehead, also, another member of the firm, he received the kindest treatment. He also became well acquainted with Mrs. Whitehead, a lady of remarkable intellectual powers, who was destined to acquire distinction in the field of fictitious literature. Mrs. Whitehead consulted him frankly about her literary productions, and placed the greatest confidence in his judgment. She was struck, as many others were, with the maturity of his powers, and with that strong literary good sense which formed not the least remarkable feature of his character.

Meanwhile he continued to write to Mr. Carlyle, and occasionally received wise and kind replies to his somewhat high-flown letters. Of these replies the following characteristic specimen has been preserved :—

LONDON, 20th May, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—Several weeks ago I duly received your letter, and read it, as I always do your letters, when they bring such news of you, with welcome and pleasure. It has been in my mind ever since to write to you with a certain expansion in some hour of leisure, but as that hour does not arrive, and, alas! gives no promise yet of arriving, I must content myself with this swift and brief acknowledgment, rather than with none at all, which is the other branch of the alternative.

You are an enthusiastic man, and look at all things through magnifying lenses, productive, too, of beautiful prismatic tints brighter than nature; nevertheless, I find your image of the object sharply distinct, and just, too, though exaggerated on a larger scale than usual. The *scale* is not mathematically important; the distinctness and the justness are alone important. On the whole, I like that mood of mind very well; a true portrait and a gigantic one, done with haloes and tints of the rainbow; there are worse kinds than that.

It gives me great pleasure to find you persevere so man-

fully, "following your star," where, except the star itself occasionally beaming in the distance, there can be little to cheer you by the way. Persevere, persevere; that is the strength of a man. I will promise you all manner of good if you persevere. You shall have victory, more conquest perhaps than perhaps you yet believe; you shall have heroic battle, which is the noblest conquest of all.

It is far from my advice that you should relax in your law studies, in any of your studies, which I honour you for prosecuting in a strenuous silence. Nevertheless, it strikes me that you might be gradually attempting something in the way of writing too. You have, doubtless, hours now and then which, by thrifty assiduity, you might devote with advantage to trials in that kind. I speak with reluctance about writing, whither, I know, all your ambition tends, opposed by all your virtue and philosophy. But I fancy you are getting stronger on that latter side, and can afford a little excursion there by a time. Writing as well as law requires to be *learned*; and to writing, as I can predict, you, amid all your law, or after all your law, will pretty certainly come at last. A solid man knows how to combine the ideal with the practical; to do the *obligato* better than another, and combine with it the *voluntario*, which others think not of. May a good Genius guide you always.

To Gordon, who likes you well, I send many kind re-

gards, and with good hopes and good wishes, I am, yours
most truly,

T. CARLYLE.

With Mr. Gordon, now Dr. Gordon, Mr. Dodds became very intimate during his residence in Edinburgh. Of this accomplished gentleman, first known as the editor of the New Statistical Account of Scotland, and afterwards as Secretary to the University of Edinburgh, he had the highest opinion, and greatly did he enjoy his friendship. Of him he wrote to a friend in the following terms:—"Few men in Edinburgh possess more *real* influence than he does, though hundreds have a more showy name. He is a true-hearted man, and one of the best friends I have in Edinburgh. He is, like myself, an *eremite*; when we get together in his snug library, we sit talking metaphysics, when all the other grave citizens are drawing on their night-caps. He is naturally a great linguist, and is master of the principal European tongues. He is what Carlyle calls 'a true man.'"

It may here be mentioned that Mr. Dodds, though having no special turn for languages, made himself, a few years after this, when he was settled in London, a master of French and German. So thorough was his knowledge of them both that, though he never spoke either of them with any fluency, he could translate with the greatest ease the most difficult French and German books and technical papers. Carlyle's advice as to German was not thrown away upon him; but

in his linguistic studies he had an eye as much to business as to literature and philosophy.

The following letter of Mr. Carlyle is specially interesting for its reference to the first interview he had with his young friend in Mr. Gordon's house at Edinburgh :—

CHELSEA, 4th May, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—Several weeks ago I received a very pleasant letter from you which has never yet been in any way acknowledged. Nothing can exceed the hurry one is kept in here. I prefer writing you even this much to absolute silence, which, in some bad hour, you might interpret otherwise.

My interview with you in Edinburgh remains very clear and very pleasant. The sight of your face, of your indomitable laughing eyes, gives new assurance ; your whole way of life seemed to me of good augury. With thews and sinews such as these, a man who will walk along steadfastly, regardless of the weather and wayside provocations, is sure enough to make some handsome journey of it. Right good speed to you ! My best wishes go with you always ; and if there be at any time any help or service I can lend you, fear not to ask it. With many kind regards and good hopes, and begging you to remember me affectionately to the Gordons,—I am, in great haste, yours always truly,

T. CARLYLE.

Soon after the date of the above, Mr. Carlyle, having heard of his friend's resolution to proceed in due time to London, to prosecute his adopted career as a lawyer, in a Scotch line of business, thus addressed him in the friendliest tone :—

CHelsea, 11th July, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—You are probably right in your determination towards London; at least I will by no means say you are wrong. Your description of Edinburgh life has much in it that agrees with my own experience and observation there, and certainly the patience with which you have seen and admitted all that, and silently gone on with it, and are still ready to go on with it, in manful diligence under such conditions as there may be, is of good augury for you here or elsewhere. “Go where we will, we find ourselves again in a conditional world.”

Of Law in London I know nothing practical. I see some few lawyers in society at times, a tough, withered, wiry sort of men; but they hide their law-economies, even when I question them, very much under lock and key. I have understood that the labour is enormous in their profession, and the reward likewise; the successful lawyer amasses hundreds of thousands, and actually converts himself into what we might call a “spiritual speldrin,” no very blessed bargain! On the whole, I would not prophesy for you the first prizes in such a course, nor like you the worse that you

went without prize at all in it. But there is much here besides Law; Law is a small item here.

The great question is: Dare you, Must you? It is an awful enterprise that of London, but also full of generous results if you have strength. Strength to look chaos and hell in the face; to struggle through them toward the Adamantine Isles! For a literary lawyer, I should say Edinburgh was far preferable. Success in Law here is totally incompatible with Literature. This you should reflect on before starting.

On the whole, if you have the offer of a clerkship that will secure you subsistence, there can be no harm in coming up to take a view of us, and to try what kind of chaos we are. There is much here to interest a brave young Scotchman, to expand him, to repress him, and in many ways instruct him, if he have strength to learn. If he will not learn, they will kill him here in one way or other.

You may depend very certainly on my omitting no opportunity that may arise to further you in this matter. If my power equalled my inclination you were very safe in it. If your present half-certain outlook end in nothing, pray apprise me of that, and I will at least speak to some persons about it.

And so I will wish you a wise resolution, wise and genuine as in the sight of God your Maker, which indeed is wishing you all. The heedless clamour and babble of our fellow-

creatures do but bewilder us. "Thou must be a great man," they cry, "or we will not be flunkies to thee!" "Who wants you for flunkies? I will be a small man!" —Believe me, yours very sincerely, T. CARLYLE.

About the year 1844, Mr. Dodds began to study in a special manner the history of the Scottish Covenanters. In his boyhood he had admired the martyrs of the Covenant, and their noble struggles for religious liberty. But it was only now that he deeply studied the literature of the period in which they lived, and made himself familiar with the records of their lives and sufferings. The result was, that the characters of these spiritual heroes fired his imagination, and woke to new life within him the spirit of poetry which had often possessed him from his youth. From that period much of his reading consisted of works bearing on the ecclesiastical history of Scotland, from the era of the Reformation to the great persecution of the Presbyterians, which began with the restoration of Charles II. in 1660, and only terminated at the revolution of 1688. As he strove to realise the features of the Covenanting times, and especially the heroic spirit of the Covenanters, his thoughts and feelings flowed almost imperceptibly into the mould of poetry; and hence the origin of these beautiful and stirring Lays which form the more precious portion of this volume.

At this time, we often exchanged poetical productions

with each other for the purpose of friendly criticism, and he sent me, in due course, a copy of his exquisite poem on the "Death of the Aged Covenanter," which had appeared in a provincial newspaper called *The Border Watch*. I was so struck with its extraordinary beauty and spirit, that I urgently entreated him to send it to the *Free Church Magazine*, in whose columns it might obtain a wider publicity. The late Dr. Hetherington, who was the editor of that periodical, gladly inserted the poem, and sought the acquaintance of its author. From 1845 to 1847, a succession of "Lays of the Covenanters," all of the same stamp, and possessing the highest merit, were contributed by Mr. Dodds to the *Free Church Magazine*, and also to *Lowe's Edinburgh Magazine*, a periodical which existed at that period, though soon after it was discontinued. These effusions attracted much attention as they appeared, though the name of the author was not generally known. The best judges have declared that they will stand a comparison with Aytoun's once popular "Lays of the Cavaliers." Indeed, I have always thought that in point of polish, fire, and sincerity, they are far superior to these belauded productions of the Edinburgh professor. The public will now have the opportunity, for the first time, of calmly forming a judgment of their merits as a series of poems illustrating a most characteristic period of Scottish history. That they breathe a fine spirit of poetry, piety, and patriotism, and also give in a lively

manner the very "form and pressure" of the Covenanting times, will be admitted even by many judges who are not in entire sympathy with their author. Nor is that Scotchman or Presbyterian to be envied who can read them without any admiration of the bloody but finally victorious struggles of the enthusiastic and dauntless children of the Covenant.

These "Lays of the Covenanters" were not written rapidly, or with that bold negligence which sometimes marks poetic inspiration. Their author studied carefully his themes before he attempted to embalm them in verse. He laboriously collected all the information about them which lay within his reach, that he might realise them more vividly in his own mind, and present them with corresponding liveliness to others. He also corrected what he had written with incessant care; and however accurate his manuscript was when sent to the printer, the proof was sure to be returned with many important alterations. These alterations were invariably for the better, and generally in the way of condensation. But Mr. Dodds, whether he expressed his thoughts in prose or in verse, was a very careful and conscientious writer. He had no ambition to compose with rapidity, and never boasted of the ease with which he could write a poem or an essay. Some of his ordinary letters were even written with uncommon pains; and the popular lectures which he prepared and delivered during the latter part of his life, were the

fruits of much careful and industrious research. Though irresolution and procrastination often marked his conduct through life, no man ever brought a greater amount of dogged perseverance to a task he had once deliberately undertaken. A lecture which he could easily have prepared sufficiently well in a few days, often cost him weeks of hard reading and sustained intellectual as well as manual toil.

While he was in Edinburgh, he visited me at the manse of Humbie, a parish of East Lothian, of which I was minister for some years before 1843. It so happens that Humbie, lying at the foot of the Lammermoor Hills, and watered by various pleasant streams that traverse in their courses romantically wooded *deans*, abounds in highly picturesque scenery. I had given him a glowing account of the natural beauties that surrounded the manse, and prepared him for rural sights and scenes which I knew he could well appreciate. He came out of town in high spirits, ready to satiate his appetite for the sweet and beautiful in nature. And certainly he revelled in the lovely scenery of Humbie with deep and contagious delight. We walked and talked together for hours in the midst of lovely woods, and sparkling waters, a calm September sky over our heads, and all around us the glorious garniture of Summer just touched into brighter colour by the gentle hand of Autumn. There was a fine mixture of poetry and philosophy in my cousin's conversation. Every sentence he uttered betrayed the

man of deep poetic feeling, yet of sober and earnest thought. At times he seemed perfectly entranced with delight as he drank in at every pore the beauty that teemed around him, and listened to the sweet, innumerable sounds that came from the woods, the streams, the air above his head, and the very grass at his feet. I was reminded of the swoons which Wordsworth describes himself as falling into, during his enraptured youth, through the overpowering and transporting effect of that life and beauty which he saw and felt in all Nature. It was impossible to be in James Dodds's company during the short period of a country walk without being impressed by his poetical temperament, and his exquisite sense of natural beauty. Benevolent feeling was largely blended with his rural enjoyment. The sight of a lamb, an ox, or any wild animal of the wood, or bird of the air, or fish of the stream, moved him to sympathy with the joys of all living creatures. He would sometimes stand still and solemnly apostrophise a staring member of a grazing herd of cattle, talking to the dumb animal in a half-serious, half-humorous vein, as if it were entitled to all the respect of a "man and a brother." I mention these things as characteristic of the abandonment into which this man of genius almost unconsciously flung himself when, escaping for a few days from the toils and cares of the town, he plunged into the pure and simple pleasures of the country.



In confirmation of the description I have given of his intense enjoyment of nature, I quote from one of his letters to a friend, written after the period of his visit to Humbie, the following passage relative to his experiences among the Pentland Hills:—"The treasures hid in the bosom of the Pentlands are untold and inexhaustible. A day spent there, with visions of the eye and visions of the mind, seems long as an antediluvian age, yet sweet and rapturous as Adam and Eve's short day in Eden. Its profound solitude and clear bright aspect of a sunny summer day are not of this earth. I have been whole days in nooks of it so lone and still, that not a linnet's wing was to be seen, or a lamb nibbling; and not so much as the hum of a bee was to be heard. Yet, with that indescribable hallelujah-like murmuring which floats all over the wilderness, and the mighty dome of heaven arching above, one felt as, like Jacob, in no dull solitude, but in a celestial-peopled ethereal sphere, where angels of God were ascending and descending, hovering around and speeding on their thousandfold ministrations. I then understood something of the natural beauty and significance of David's 'lifting his eyes to the hills whence came his aid.'"



CHAPTER V.

REMOVES TO LONDON. PARLIAMENTARY SOLICITOR. PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS. GREAT INTEREST IN LOCAL RAILWAYS. CARLYLE. LETTERS IN THE "DUMFRIES COURIER" AND THE "SCOTSMAN." LEIGH HUNT. CRAIGCROOK SONNETS. MORGAN WILL CASE. THE GLEN TILT CASE.

TOWARDS the close of 1846, Mr. Dodds removed from Edinburgh to London, in order to commence business as a Scottish Parliamentary agent. He had by this time acquired great knowledge and valuable experience in the office of Messrs. Lockhart, Hunter, & Whitehead. He had mastered all the ordinary details of Scottish legal practice, and was no stranger to the general principles of law. His acuteness, his penetration, and his knowledge of human nature also helped to qualify him for that branch of the legal profession which he now adopted. Both Mr. Hunter and Mr. Whitehead acted by him in the most generous manner on this occasion. Without their assistance and patronage he could not safely have undertaken the risk of establishing himself in London. Being also a married man, he required all the help and encouragement in his new line of life

which kind friends could offer, or himself could properly receive.

When settled in London, he wrote to me cheerfully of his prospects, and described himself as more composed in mind than he had previously been. "My mind," he said, "has been delivered from bondage and wretchedness for ever. That liberty, that glory never can be taken from me more in this universe. Now I know God, and am known of Him. In Him I live, move, and have my being. I know in whom I have believed, and no vain babble of man can henceforth obscure that knowledge, or shake that belief: But this is a subject so ever present with my own thoughts that I am apt to let it run over without stop or measure."

"I am here in a very nice place, spacious, airy, and pleasant, close upon Westminster Abbey, whose ancient, venerable columns and spires daily and almost hourly greet my eye. I must get hold of a sly corner and have myself buried there, let dean and chapter say what they will. The Titans stormed Olympus; why not take by storm a niche in the Temple of Fame? Ay, well! Fame is good enough as an epaulette for parade; but Duty is the wedding garment, without which we never can be admitted into that which is truly *immortality*.

And give to me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice!"

In another and still more characteristic letter, he wrote

to me as follows :—"I am here with many hopes, and also with many anxieties. The support I have is of a solid and propitious kind. You may be assured that I shall not relax in industry and anxious care to establish the business, which is in some respects my only worldly hope. Yet you will wonder when I tell you in confidence that I have no vocation this way. This, in other days, might have alarmed you for the success of the attempt; but it is otherwise with me now. Whatever may be the longings and imaginings of my soul, these never interfere with the plain daily labours of life. Should the next phasis of my proteus-like existence be a 'navvie,' welcome the coarse smock, the little basin hat, hobnails, wheelbarrow, everything. The present with me is divine, heaven's clock striking the hour wherever its hand may point. The step that is *next* I never fear to take; right on, some goal, were it even Death, meets one. You may be sure, then, I shall prosecute this new line of life with diligence, ardour, and zeal; and though not a sanguine person, I expect to meet with some success."

Mr. Dodds, as has been noted, was a great admirer of Dr. Chalmers. In one of his letters, written a few days after the death of the great Christian philanthropist, he thus alludes to that event: "The death of Chalmers came upon me just like one of those grand solemn nights that follow a long beautiful summer's day. After the first tears shed, not for him, but for ourselves, I felt only a solemn, ex-

altered joy. ‘That great spirit,’ I said, ‘half angelic even while here, has soared to its high and glorious kindred.’ Every man must feel by instinct, whatever his belief, that a soul such as his must have entered into the noblest and most glorious regions of the universe. As to intrinsic purity and grandeur, Humanity never was more highly developed than in the character of Chalmers. How can one grudge that such a bounding and upward leaping spirit has regained its own element!” In such a strain could the hard-headed, hard-working Parliamentary agent write amidst the anxieties and toils of his new business; and thus did he show that, while his mind and bodily strength were necessarily given to harassing legal work, his heart was largely preoccupied with higher things, and with men who were great in the world of thought and philanthropic action.

His office at first was in Abingdon Street, Westminster, but he afterwards removed it to Fludyer Street. The principal part of his business for many years was the management of railway bills before Parliament: and, of course, the bills that fell into his hands were nearly all connected with Scotland. By this time the great trunk railways, both in England and Scotland, had been constructed, or were in process of construction; but there remained a large number of branch lines to be projected and made, in order to complete the railway system, and fully develop the resources of the

country. Mr. Dodds felt it his duty, therefore, as it was manifestly his interest, to make a thorough study of the projection and formation of those smaller local lines which were specially needed in the North, and which could be economically and profitably made. He was, in consequence, highly successful in promoting local railway enterprise, and in getting through Parliament many of the bills to which it gave rise. At various places, during the Parliamentary recess, he conferred with landed proprietors, merchants, and other persons interested in railway extension, lectured in public halls on the benefits of improved locomotion, and otherwise stimulated the great railway movement of the day. He thus soon became well known in that branch of his profession which he had been induced to select; and at length he assumed a partner to assist him in his gradually increasing business.

It may with perfect truth be affirmed that Mr. Dodds, for years, did more than any other man to promote the formation of local, or branch railways in Scotland. One of the first and most successful of these lines, the St. Andrews, which proved the parent or forerunner of many others, was almost entirely his own creation. Speaking of it in a letter to Mr. Hunter, he says, "From the first projection of it, I advised and superintended all the successive steps taken; I attended to all the local and preliminary arrangements, as well as to the subsequent parliamentary proceedings. I do

not mean to say that I was factotum, surveyor, engraver, and everything, but that I was taken as the advising solicitor throughout; and I have to say that owing to the success of this St. Andrews line three other schemes of the kind have been committed to my care. I have always acted on the maxim that such enterprises can only succeed through the exercise of great personal diligence, and the observance of strict economy.

Before his firm had been established four years, it reached a degree of eminence which even his sanguine friends had little expected. It was particularly successful in obtaining the management of Scotch appeal cases before the House of Lords. In 1850, Mr. Dodds wrote to Mr. Hunter that his firm had, at the time, the largest appeal business in London, a business three or four times larger than that even of some of the old houses; and that the success had attracted the special notice of the House of Lords' officials. "This," he adds, "is all very agreeable, and as it becomes known in Edinburgh it will certainly tell in our favour. As you well know, a large business enlarges business, and he that hath much to him shall be added more. We have no fewer than thirteen good appeal cases in hand; and I am told that fifteen is the highest number that any firm like ours has ever been known to have."

Mr. Dodds had not been long in London before he made his appearance at 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, then as now the

residence of Mr. Carlyle. During the first years of his London life he attended many literary reunions under the philosopher's roof, and became acquainted there with some of the first literary men of the day. Among those whom he met either in Mr. Carlyle's house, or elsewhere, may be mentioned Dr. John Carlyle, "Barry Cornwall," Professor Craik, Mr. G. H. Lewes, and Mr. Leigh Hunt, with all of whom he was on friendly terms. Though never obtrusive in the company of such men, he quietly took part in many a brilliant conversation, and seldom failed to contribute to its value. He had really great conversational powers, though on some occasions he did not do himself justice as a talker. His poetic fancy and rich vein of humour, joined to his literary stores and wide reach of general information, were fitted to make him shine at any dinner-table, or in any evening party. But a sort of strange bashfulness, or downright waywardness, not unfrequently made him sit silent in company, or say little that betokened the extraordinary affluence of his mind.

His intercourse with Mr. Carlyle was kept up by him very eagerly for some time; but it gradually slackened, and at length was almost entirely discontinued. The increasing claims of business, the extent of his labours as an author and public lecturer, and his growing love of quiet domestic life induced him to give up literary society, and indeed society of every kind. In respect of the world he became

much of a recluse, though he diligently attended to the duties of his profession, and never failed to respond to the legitimate claims of literature and philanthropy. But though he ceased to visit Mr. Carlyle, he always retained his original admiration of his genius, and his affection for him as a friend and benefactor. In proof of this, it may be sufficient here to quote a passage from a paper on Carlyle, sent by him about this time to the *Dumfries Courier* :—“The tongue has the ‘sough’ of Annandale, an echo of the Solway, with its compliments to old Father Thomas. A keen, sharp, singing voice, in the genuine Border key, and tranquil and sedate withal, neighbourly and frank, and always in unison with what is uttered. In his conversation he sees the very thing he speaks; it breathes and moves palpable to him, and hence his words form a picture. When you come from him the impression is like having seen a great brilliant panorama, everything has been made visible and naked to your sight; but, more and better far than that, you bear home with you an indelible feeling of love for the man, deep as the heart, long as life. No man has ever inspired more of this personal affection. Not to love Carlyle when you know him, is something unnatural; as if we should say we did not love the breeze that fans our cheek, or the vine-tree which has refreshed us both with its leafy shade and its exuberant juices. He abounds himself in love and good works. His life, ‘not only of books,’ but as a man amongst

his fellows, has been a continual shower of benefits. As to the young men, more especially, to whom he has been the Good Samaritan, pouring oil upon their wounds, and binding up their bruised limbs, and putting them in the way of recovery of health and youthful energy, the number of them can scarcely be told, and will never be known till the great day of account."

The article from which this is quoted forms one of a remarkable series which Mr. Dodds communicated to a Dumfries newspaper under the names of *London Echoes*. These productions of his pen were far superior to the letters of London correspondents that make such a figure in provincial journals. They were really lively, original, and eloquent essays on leading men and popular topics of the day. The fresh and faithful sketches of eminent characters they contained gave them a high literary value, and suggested to many the idea of their republication in a separate form. One paper, on Joseph Mazzini, was greatly admired by Mr. Carlyle and his friends, to whom the great Italian patriot was familiarly known. All of them were greatly relished by the editor of the once famous *Dumfries Courier*, Mr. John M'Diarmid, himself a man of genius, who, while he conducted his paper with unsurpassed spirit, published a number of original works full of admirable rural sketches, and breathing a fine appreciation of the works of nature. Between Mr. Dodds and Mr. M'Diarmid a warm friendship

sprang up, based on common tastes and literary connection. They often met at Dumfries, where the generous editor of the *Courier* kept open house for literary men, and for distinguished strangers who came to visit the last humble home and the splendid mausoleum of Burns.

The letters in the *Dumfries Courier* were continued some time after this, much to the delectation of the town and country readers of that paper. At a later period, Mr. Dodds contributed articles of a similar kind, but of a fully more political character, to the *Scotsman*, the leading Edinburgh journal. They attracted much attention while they appeared, and were universally admired, though their authorship was known only to a few. Mr. Dodds was repeatedly urged to collect them into a volume, and publish them with his name. He even seriously entertained this idea of republication, and at one time made some preparations for carrying it out; but the pressure of business, and his characteristic irresolution in regard to such matters, prevented him from doing more than make a beginning. The remarkably skilful and brilliant sketches, which so many wished to see in a permanent shape, were left, therefore, to lie buried among the treasures that enrich, at rare intervals, the strata-like files of the newspaper press.

One of the chief literary personages Mr. Dodds got early acquainted with in London was Mr. Leigh Hunt. A friendship of no common warmth sprang up between him and the

veteran author. Mr. Hunt, like many men of genius of the past generation, was improvident in money matters, and was consequently often in pecuniary difficulties. In regard to worldly business he was little better than a child, and where other men would have extricated themselves, he was utterly helpless. Mr. Dodds more than once took the management of his affairs, giving him legal advice, conferring with his creditors, and arranging about the payment, or partial payment of his debts. Yet while his acquaintance with the brilliant poet and essayist gave him at times not a little trouble, the delight he took in his society suffered no abatement. He admired Hunt as much as ever, in spite of the weaknesses that made him a bit of a burden to his friends. In some of his letters to Mr. Hunter he hits off the man in admirable style. In September, 1850, he writes:—"I have been much with Leigh Hunt this season, and seen him in all phases. He is a glorious creation. I wonder the angels have not run off with him long ago; there are so many things about him almost too fine, too subtle, too mystically bright for him to dwell among ordinary mortals. It takes a good deal to make me *wonder*; I have read, and felt so much, and seen so much of the world. But Leigh Hunt does make me *wonder*. As he speaks to you, what he says is all so momently inspired, so pure and simply flowing, but all so ethereal, so *wise of the world*, yet not mere worldly-wise, and so heavenly-tinctured, that one sometimes feels as

if he were about to unveil his radiant wings, and, with a farewell look of enchanting sweetness, fly to the orb which is his home. I never felt anything like the perpetual spell with which he entwines you; crisply clear, yet somehow so strange and bright that one has to look out now and then to the trees and stone-walls to assure oneself of being still in the sphere of the 'Kensington 'buses.' Were I to write to you immediately after leaving him, I could retain a great part of his conversation; but some of it is so flashingly *impromptu*, and some so delicate and quint-essential that it cannot always be preserved."

In another letter to the same friend, Mr. Dodds suggests that Mr. Hunt should be asked to contribute an article to the *Edinburgh Review* on the "Court of Urbino." A book had just been published on that out-of-the-way, but interesting subject, and the practised essayist, supremely acquainted with the history of Italy in the Middle Ages, was anxious to write an article on a Court so long renowned for its gentlemen wits and scholars, and where Raphael himself first rose to distinction. Mr. Hunter was well acquainted with Mr. Empson, editor of the *Edinburgh Review* at that time. He was just the man to press the claims of Mr. Hunt, which were supported, as Mr. Dodds mentions, by the strong opinion of Lord John Russell. The result was that Mr. Hunt, who, it seems, had contributed to the *Review* in former days, was requested to write an article on the subject

that had attracted him so strongly. The title chosen for the article was the "Dukes of Urbino," and how the writer laboriously prepared it, appears from another letter of his friend :—"Hunt says he never wrote anything with so much labour, with such heaviness both in the head and in the heart; that he could hardly drag on, though he knew all the parts of the subject as well as all the walks of Kensington Park; that he sat often puzzling himself for half-an-hour over a common link of his narrative that on former occasions would never have cost him a moment's thought; that he wrote, rubbed out, altered, and changed the alterations; that, if the right sort of thing had filtered out at last, great was the quantity of gravel it had been strained through. After he had finished his work, he was under some apprehension that the residuum, when tested, would be found worthless, and that Mr. Empson would return it. But Mr. Empson accepted the article, and praised it very highly." The *Quarterly Review* of that year had also an article on the subject of Urbino, so associated in the public mind with the great name of Raphael.

But while Mr. Dodds was intimate with Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Hunt, and a few other authors of eminence, he did not court the society of London literary men. The late Professor Craik he well knew, and greatly admired for his moral worth and his distinction in literature. But from newspaper-men, magazine-men, and miscellaneous "popular



writers," he deliberately stood aloof. Neither his tastes nor the calls of business permitted his formal entrance into literary society. In one of his earlier letters from London, he says:—"I have an invincible repugnance to pushing acquaintance among the litterateurs of the day. I generally find professional and mercantile men in every way more valuable acquaintances, not only more sedate and amiable, and more free from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, but also better informed, more deliberate and judicious, nay, much abler and more enlightened men altogether."

During his autumnal visits to Scotland, Mr. Dodds frequently spent some days at Craigmor, the delightful and classic residence of his friend Mr. Hunter. Sheltered from the west by the beautifully wooded Corstorphine hills, and commanding a picturesque view of Edinburgh, with its romantic environs, that mansion, long the loved home of Lord Jeffrey, is equally attractive to the lover of nature and the student of Scottish literature. Mr. Hunter was a man whose native love of letters was never abated by the study and practice of law; and in Craigmor he passed the latter portion of his life in the enjoyment of as much earthly happiness as falls to the lot even of the most successful men of business. The troops of friends that gathered round him embraced much of the talent and culture of the Scottish metropolis. Between him and Mr. Dodds the friendship that existed was of a very peculiar kind, tinged as it was on

the part of the younger man with a deep sentiment of gratitude and chivalrous devotion.

The following sonnet, written by Mr. Dodds in October, 1853, is a singularly beautiful testimony to the harmony of Mr. Hunter's life and surroundings. A finer tribute has seldom been paid by one friend to another. Professor Craik declared it to be worthy of any living English poet.

CRAIGCROOK.

TO J. H.

I HAVE not found so true a Harmony
As crowns this life of thine, my much-loved friend !
See ! the bright roses o'er the violets bend ;
The oaks with hazels sing in windy glee ;
The lawn looks coy up to yon gazing hill ;
On the same bough are dove and blackbird seen ;
And, as we talk under this alley green,
The robin makes a third, with answering trill.
Within, thy Home is meet for such a spot :
Thy youthful dreams, how rare ! have grown to truth ;
Still rarer, life keeps fine as dream of youth ;
Rarest and best, *this* harmony is given,
Thy Real drinks music from Ideal Thought,
And Earth o'erwreathes, not hides, the Gate to Heaven !

Mr. Hunter, with great skill and felicity, replied to the effusion of his friend in what he called

A REPLICATION OF RHYMES.

TO J. D.

THINE own life too hath reached a Harmony,
Of rounder, nobler swell than mine, my friend !
HE is the Hero, whose strong soul can bend
A turbulent nature, panting in the glee
Of young ambition to ascend the hill
Where Worldly Greatness, crowned with power, is seen ;
And, conqueror of himself, can seek the green
Low vale where true Peace dwells, and list the trill
Of home-bred joys that sanctify the spot.
Earth's dazzling meteors for the Torch of Truth
Thou hast exchanged ; and for wild dreams of youth
More glorious aims and nobler gifts are given,
A Soul of power, a well of lofty Thought,
A chastened Hope that ever points to Heaven.

J. H.

It has already been mentioned that Mr. Dodds's business rapidly increased after he had once fairly settled in London. That business consisted almost entirely of the management of private bills before Parliament, and of Scotch Appeal

Cases in the House of Lords. As a Parliamentary solicitor, he was equally remarkable for his sound judgment and great industry. But in the conduct of appeal cases he was also very skilful and fortunate. One Scotch appeal case, above all others, got him signal honour, and showed what he could have done had he belonged to a higher branch of his profession. This was known in legal circles as "The Great Morgan Will Case." An old gentleman of the name of Morgan, who had made a large fortune in the West Indies, died without leaving any near or recognised relatives. He had not made a formal will, but there were found among his papers certain rough jottings indicating his intention of leaving his property to build and endow a Boys' Hospital in the town of Dundee. These jottings, or scrawls, though distinct enough in their way, were universally thought at first to be of no testamentary validity. The opinion of leading Scotch Counsel was taken by some Dundee citizens, and found to be quite unfavourable to the claims of the town. But Provost Thoms, a shrewd and public-spirited man, was not quite satisfied that the Morgan "writings" were altogether valueless, and sent to Mr. Dodds a *facsimile* of them for his inspection and opinion. During one of his Parliamentary vacations, Mr. Dodds made a complete study of the whole matter, and the result was, "that he formed," to use his own words, "the clearest and most decided opinion as a lawyer that the said writings were a perfectly good will,

and contained an effectual bequest of as much money as should be necessary for establishing a hospital for the education and maintenance of 100 boys in Dundee."

He wrote out a full opinion to that effect, and in the autumn of 1855 he expounded his views regarding the whole matter at a meeting in Dundee attended by about 200 of its leading inhabitants. A considerable sum was immediately subscribed to try the whole question in the Courts of Law. A claim for the town of Dundee was soon after made in the Court of Session, but it was rejected almost with contempt. Encouraged, however, by a favourable opinion of Sir Richard Bethel, afterwards Lord Westbury, the Dundee claimants carried the case to the House of Lords; and there the highest judges of the kingdom decided unanimously that "the writings" formed a good will, and that there was an effectual bequest of as much money as was required to found such a hospital as the testator had mentioned. The decision of the Supreme Court of Appeal almost literally accorded with the views Mr. Dodds had maintained in opposition to the highest legal authorities in Scotland.

Mr. Morgan left nearly £100,000, and thus there was abundance of funds for the erection of the hospital. Mr. Dodds, writing with just pride of the result of the litigation, said: "The benefit to Dundee will be incalculable. Much, no doubt, will depend on the soundness and wisdom with

which the Institution may be planned, and afterwards administered. But we may hope that good sense will prevail, and that the experience gained from so many other towns where large hospitals exist will not be lost on Dundee."

Another Scotch appeal case in which he was professionally engaged greatly interested Mr. Dodds, from the public rights it involved. This was the celebrated Glen Tilt Case, arising out of an attempt of the Duke of Athole to restrict, or rather prevent, the access of tourists and the public generally to one of the grandest mountain scenes in Scotland. The Duke obtained a decision in his favour in the Court of Session; but Mr. Dodds, on being intrusted with the conduct of an appeal to the House of Lords, expressed a decided opinion that the popular side would win in the Supreme Court. He flung his whole soul into the case, which he looked at not merely with the eye of a lawyer, but with the feelings of a public-spirited Scotchman. It cost him much labour and careful thought, and he looked forward with great anxiety to the issue. Supreme was his satisfaction when the House of Lords pronounced what he thought not only a just, but a most important and valuable judgment.



CHAPTER VI.

VISITS TO GALLOWAY. TWO GALLOWAY LAIRDS. LECTURES ON THE COVENANTERS AND THEIR TIMES. REV. DR. ROGERS. INAUGURATION OF THE GUTHRIE MONUMENT AT STIRLING. PUBLIC BREAKFAST IN HIS HONOUR. MONUMENT TO THE WIGTOWN MARTYRS. ADDRESS AT THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE. WALLACE MONUMENT MOVEMENT.

IT has been already stated that Mr. Dodds, when writing and publishing in periodicals his poems on Covenanting themes, made a special study of the history of the Scottish Covenants and their heroic adherents. By means of genuine historical research, he strove hard to realise the scenes and times to which his poetical outpourings referred. Even after he had ceased to write Lays of the Covenanters, he continued, at his leisure, to prosecute that line of study which always had for him a strong fascination. He read critically all books of Scottish Church History that fell into his hands, and made a special effort to get access to works of original or standard authority. Still further to enliven his conceptions of the Covenanters and their struggles, he visited, during his autumnal journeys in Scotland, many scenes made

famous by the battles and martyrdoms of the religious patriots whom he so sincerely admired.

Certain regions in the Lowlands of Scotland were specially attractive to him, as being the native homes or chosen haunts of the men of the Covenant. These are Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, with Dumfriesshire, Wigtown and Kirkcudbright that go by the name of Galloway. It so happened that calls of business frequently took him, between the years 1850 and 1860, down to Galloway, a region peculiarly rich in Covenanting memories. In Galloway he always enjoyed himself exceedingly, delighted with its fine mountain scenery, and solemnised by its lonely martyrs' graves. With one gentleman of that district he became well acquainted, Mr. Mackie, of Bargally, at that time member for the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright. At Bargally he always found a hospitable welcome, and there he spent, at various periods, some singularly happy days. The company of Mr. Mackie, the delights of his home, the scenery and very air of the place, all charmed him after escaping from the cares and toils of business in London. He celebrated in various beautiful poems Bargally and other pleasant spots in Galloway ; and to Mr. Mackie he felt strongly bound by many ties of grateful affection.

He was also wonderfully taken with another Galloway "laird," the late James Stewart, Esq. of Cairnsmore, who was a great friend of Mr. Mackie, though opposed to him in politics. "Bargally" and "Cairnsmore," as the two gentle-

men were popularly called, after the fashion of Scotland, loved each other as brothers. They were both very excellent and generous men in their generation, aspiring not to fame in the world, but content with the simple ways of country life. Yet Cairnsmore had talents which, if fully cultivated, might have borne him to high distinction. One of his sons, Patrick Stewart, rose to eminence in India as a gallant and scientific soldier, being the first man who successfully introduced the field telegraph into active military operations. But let us see what Mr. Dodds, fresh from London life, writes of "Cairnsmore" in June, 1856 : "When I was at Bargally I made Mr. Stewart's acquaintance ; and an extraordinary man he is. He invited me to Cairnsmore, and there I spent with him an agreeable day. I was exceedingly struck with his wonderfully plastic and powerful mind, and his marked and original character, a Dalton, self-buried in the sands of Cree. He is one of the world's 'great men,' comparatively lost. He has been deficient in 'the last infirmity of noble minds.' " There always have been not a few Cairnsmores in the world, especially among heirs to comfortable estates, and men who from choice, or force of circumstances reside in the quiet places of the country. High talent, in order to blaze up among men, requires a culture, an excitement, and an opportunity, which are not always, perhaps not often, found united at the right time or in the right way.

While he thus nourished his intellect and imagination with the exciting materials supplied by his visits to Galloway, Mr. Dodds prosecuted with renewed relish his historical studies. The result was the preparation of a series of biographical papers, which he first delivered as popular lectures, and finally expanded into a volume. No compositions of the kind were ever written with greater fulness of heart, or with greater pains and industry. Mr. Dodds, while admiring the Covenanters, and their struggles for liberty, was very careful to ascertain the truth concerning their principles and practices, the character of their leaders, and the proper bearing of the events that make up their history. He was no blind enthusiast in this matter, but a keen and thoughtful historical student, bent on doing justice alike to the persecuted and their persecutors. What he has written of the Covenanters has, therefore, a high value in the eyes of all impartial readers. He has never sunk the philosopher and the statesman in the Scotchman and Presbyterian in treating of men and struggles that peculiarly appeal to the prepossessions of most students of Scottish history.

In 1856 Mr. Dodds became acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Charles Rogers, Royal Chaplain, Stirling Castle, then engaged in appealing to the patriotism of Scotland for the erection of a monument to the great national hero, Sir William Wallace. Dr. Rogers, the originator, and for many years the indefatigable promoter of the Wallace

monument project, was specially attracted to Mr. Dodds by a common sympathy with the Covenanters. He induced the London Parliamentary solicitor, then hardly known beyond the limits of his own legal circle, to deliver at Stirling and other towns a series of four lectures on Covenanting subjects. These lectures, prepared with much care, and read with remarkable effect, attracted great attention, and were warmly admired by large audiences. After being celebrated in many parts of Scotland they were at length delivered by special request in the Queen Street Hall, Edinburgh. The requisition addressed to the author for the delivery of these lectures in the metropolis was signed by judges, members of Parliament, professors of the University, magistrates, doctors of divinity of all the Churches, physicians, advocates, editors, artists, and other influential citizens. The high expectations of the requisitionists were amply justified. The most accomplished men who heard them were greatly struck with their eloquence, as well as the original research and historic insight they displayed.

In November, 1857, was inaugurated in the new cemetery at Stirling a statue to the memory of the martyr, James Guthrie. This noble monument to one of the greatest of Scotland's spiritual heroes was erected mainly through the liberality of the late Mr. William Drummond, an excellent man, who did honour to Stirling and his native land. Mr. Dodds was requested to deliver an inaugural

address on the interesting occasion, and cheerfully undertook the honourable task. Standing beside the unveiled monument, and in presence of the magistrates and a great multitude of the citizens of Stirling, he dilated in magnificent style on Guthrie and his times, the principles of the British constitution, and the great liberties we now enjoy. Part of his estimate of Guthrie's character is as follows: "By whatever test we try him, we shall not hesitate to pronounce him the first man of his day, the first in talent, in weight of intellect, in fertility and decision of mind, in promptitude and force of action, in all that kind of intellectual aptitude and energy which rouses and sustains the people in their contests with despotism, and commands ultimate success, though it may not be attained in the lifetime of the leader himself. . . . To his solid and brilliant qualities he added a character as spotless and lofty as humanity can attain to, or earth behold. No stain ever fell upon it, no breath of calumny ever assailed it. Hard things have been said of Knox and Melville, and some of them, I for one admit, deservedly. Against Henderson little has been alleged; for he was grave, prudent, temperate, and subdued, and laid himself little open to the attacks of scandal; yet against him also insinuations have been levelled. But against Guthrie the mouths of all the dogs of his time were silent. The chroniclers of scandal were dumb; and his bitterest enemies always spoke respectfully of his character."

The address concludes with this splendid peroration, which is quite Demosthenic in style and spirit : “ Beside this monument, as an altar of freedom, let us plight our faith and swear our covenant to be the enemies of all that is false and slavish, the friends and promoters of all that is true, good, and free. Yes ! immortal spirit of the long-departed martyr ! I know not what are the laws of the spirit-land ; I know not in what part of the universe is the stately and beatific palace where thou dwellest ; I know not what are thy employments, or where is the circuit of thy flight. But I am persuaded, not from any certain facts, but from the promptings of feeling, and imagination, and sympathy, that thou still hast an interest in sublunary concerns ; that thou art not all lost in heavenly ecstacies, but still watchest that struggle for freedom in which thou didst fall a martyr. If then, immortal spirit ! thou art now hovering over us in this the scene of thy labours and griefs, thy loves and joys when in the flesh, bear witness ! that, standing around this monumental stone, we devote ourselves to the maintenance of those principles for which thou didst die so nobly, and resolve rather ourselves to perish than survive the liberties of our country and our race.”

The Rev. Dr. Beith, of Stirling, who was present at the inauguration ceremony, declared, at the breakfast given two days afterwards in honour of Mr. Dodds, that “ he beheld in the statue one of the most beautiful pieces of sculpture that

could be seen in Scotland ; that he had listened to an oration, bearing on the history and character of the illustrious dead, which for truth, beauty, judgment, and power could not be excelled ; that it was not an easy thing to be true to history, true to the views of Guthrie which might be justly entertained, and yet to make a speech which would offend none, but give satisfaction to persons of all shades of opinion who heard it." This high and discriminating praise was amply merited. In all his speeches delivered on public occasions Mr. Dodds uniformly combined the calm judgment of a philosopher with the fire of a poet and orator.

At the breakfast, which was presided over by the chief magistrate of Stirling, Mr. Dodds was presented with a magnificent quarto Bible, in a box formed of Scottish oak, elegantly bound, and bearing an inscription commemorative of his services at the inauguration of the Guthrie monument. He made a beautiful speech in returning thanks for the precious gift, and descanted delightfully on the classic beauties and historic glories of the ancient town of Stirling. Speaking of the civic munificence of Mr. William Drummond, he said: "When a private citizen walking your streets, and attending to his shop with the rest of you, without parade, without flourish of trumpets, as quietly and easily as he would purchase a toy for a child, pays down a large price for that bold, commanding site on which Guthrie's monument is placed, and makes it a gift for the public weal, there is every

reason to be encouraged, to be stimulated, to anticipate a growing interest and harmony in all that relates to the beautifying of your city. Such munificence transcends the usual limits of provincial liberality. It carries us back to the palmy days of Genoa and Florence, when the citizens considered it their duty, their pride, their glory to dedicate their wealth to the graceful and classical adornment of those cities within whose walls that wealth had been made, and in whose increasing importance and grandeur they felt a common interest. This tendency in man to improve, to beautify, to lavish, as it were, the treasures of his brain and heart on that corner of the world where he dwells, and which is his home, is a tendency that has a solemn aspect, and contains within it matter of high significance and import."

One of the results of the visits Mr. Dodds paid to friends in Galloway was his delivery at Wigtown of his lectures on the the Covenanters. These lectures had the effect of giving new life to a movement originated in the place some years before for the erection of a monument to the "Wigtown Martyrs." These martyrs have been peculiarly celebrated in the history of Scotland, and their very names are dear to all true Scottish Presbyterians. Margaret Lauchlison, a widow of sixty-three, and Margaret Wilson, a maiden of eighteen, in terms of a sentence of one of the Courts of the persecuting Government of the time, were drowned on the 11th of

May, 1685, near Wigtown, at a place where the waters of the small river Blednoch mingle with the salt tide of the Solway. Both of the women met their doom with a quiet but exalted heroism. The younger of them, who was last put to death, especially showed a beautiful and pathetic Christian fortitude that has touched the hearts and bedewed the eyes of thousands since her day. All the leading historians who have given any account of these melancholy persecuting times in Scotland have failed not to record with gentle hand the tragedy of the tender but heroic Wigtown martyrs. It has been reserved for a Scottish lawyer of the present day, Mr. Mark Napier, the biographer of Graham of Claverhouse, known as Viscount Dundee, to deny the reality of the execution of the two women at Wigtown, and to heap upon their heads the coarsest ribaldry. But his attempt to gainsay the truth of history has signally failed, and the reality of the martyrdom has lately been proved afresh by a superabundance of authentic and consistent evidence.

On the 17th August, 1858, Mr. Dodds delivered an inaugural address at Wigtown on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of a monument erected to the memory of the martyrs. An immense assemblage of people was gathered together from all parts of the surrounding country to witness the impressive ceremony, and to hear a vindication of the Covenanters. Mr. Dodds's speech was

one of his greatest efforts. With a full heart he did justice to the two Galloway women who died for the truth, and then he splendidly expatiated on his favourite themes, the heroism of the Covenanters and their services to British liberty. Alluding to the attempts made by her executioners to shake the constancy of Margaret Wilson, and her simple, sublime bearing in the midst of her last trial, the orator said : "Dragged half-dead from the waters, she was urged again 'to pray for the king,' which then meant, as was well understood, to approve of, to bid God-speed to, the whole tyranny and iniquity and Antichristianism of the ruling powers. She had already been overwhelmed in the horrors of death ; the black devouring floods were hissing at her feet, as if greedy for their prey ; life, and the sweets of life, inviting her one way ; death, in one of his most wild and horrific forms, yawning to swallow her up the other way. Will not her heart fail ? Will not the strain upon her nerves be too great for her to bear ? Her mind must be bewildered. Surely for life, for sweet young life, she will grasp at any straw that is offered. Not so the holy, heavenly maiden. Amid the roar of the waves, the groans and lamentations of the people, the mingled flatteries and threats of the persecutors, and amid the awfulness of the pains of death, half-endured, her intellect was calm and unclouded, her judgment firm and unshaken, her thoughts as clear, and her language as precise and careful as if she had

been a professor in the chair of theology, and not a poor maiden of eighteen in the midst of her martyr agonies."

In May, 1859, Mr. Dodds met with a bereavement that deeply touched his heart. This was the death of his venerable mother, the only parent he had ever known, a woman of strongly marked character, from whom he had derived not a little of his ardent temperament. Of warm feelings, of deep unquestioning faith, and simple-minded piety, she exercised a stronger influence upon her son than perhaps either of them knew. During the later portion of her lengthened life she was dependent on her son for support, and for some years before her death she lived under his roof in London, where she was cared for by him and his family with all true affection and respect.

Having been appointed London Secretary to the Central Committee charged with procuring funds for the Wallace monument, Mr. Dodds, along with Dr. Rogers, held meetings at Dunfermline, Falkirk, Ayr, Dumfries, and other important towns. In all these places he was the principal speaker, and wisely, as well as eloquently, did he plead for the national tribute to the memory of the martyred Scottish hero. In his interesting "Leaves from my Autobiography," Dr. Rogers speaks of his fellow-labourer "as a gentleman of rare gifts and true patriotic sentiment, who had consented to join him in carrying on the work." The Dunfermline meeting was presided over by Mr. Baillie Cochrane, of Lam-

ington, M.P., a descendant of Wallace, and the owner of his estates. At Ayr, a town specially associated with the exploits of the hero, the chairman of the meeting was Sir James Fergusson, of Kilkerran, M.P.; and there Mr. Dodds thus disposed of a common objection to the project of a Wallace monument: "Some have expressed a vain fear that the erection of such a monument, as betokening our Scottish nationality, may be antagonistic to England. Antagonistic to England! our majestic and mighty sister, united to us by community of race and opinion, by long and endearing intercourse. It is almost impossible even to imagine a contingency which would bring about the smallest collision between us. But it is easy to foresee a turn of events in Europe in this uncertain and troubled time, when the nationality of Scotland, our inspiring recollections, and our adhesion to the liberty of nations, may be of immense importance in strengthening our common British Empire, and carrying it triumphantly through conflicts and unhallowed combinations which may yet menace or overtake it. And if a time ever come when despotism enters the lists with the one empire of free men, I can say the first soldier ordered by the tyrants to march against this land, or any of its dependencies, the first gun fired in the battle between despotism and freedom, will send a thrill of exultation through old Scotland such as she has never felt since the day that Wallace fought the battle of Stirling Bridge, and Bruce the battle of Bannockburn."

The foundation stone of the national monument to Wallace on the Abbey Craig, Stirling, was laid with extraordinary pomp and ceremonial, on the 24th June, 1861, the 547th anniversary of the battle of Bannockburn. The procession of Volunteers, representatives of Municipal Bodies, Curling Clubs, Gardeners Lodges, Oddfellows and Masonic Lodges, was unprecedented for its extent, variety, and splendour. Marshalled in the King's Park, under the command of Lieut.-General Sir James Maxwell Wallace, K.C.B., a descendant of the illustrious hero, it moved in triumphal array, with banners flying and pipers playing, to the lofty eminence that has been called the geographical centre of Scotland, where, with all the antique and gorgeous ceremonial of Scottish Free Masonry, the stone was to be laid. It was three miles in length, and as it marched along the winding road, and up to the sacred height, it presented a most majestic spectacle. The Duke of Athole, K.T., as Grand Master Mason of Scotland, presided at the ceremony, and did full honour to the august occasion. When the stone had been lowered to its place, and declared duly laid, a salute of artillery, by express command of the British Government, was fired at a given signal from Stirling Castle. Nothing that was fitted to stir the hearts of the great assembly and to honour the glorious name of Wallace was wanting to the ceremonial of the day. Sir Archibald Alison, in an eloquent speech delivered on the spot, said: "The guns of Stirling

Castle announce that the Sovereign of the realm, the descendant of Robert Bruce, has given her cordial consent to the movement. The Duke of Cambridge, in the name of the army, has presented the meeting with the sword of Sir William Wallace. The Earl of Elgin, the lineal descendant of King Robert Bruce, has sent the sword of that noble Sovereign; and the Duke of Montrose, the Lord Lieutenant of the County, has sent the sword of his illustrious ancestor, Sir John de Græme. The highest in rank, the first in station, have combined in this great movement; and more striking still is the proof which the movement gives of the universal and deep sense of gratitude and admiration in which the services of Wallace to his country are now held, after the lapse of six hundred years, by his grateful countrymen. Upwards of 25,000 men in uniform have assembled here to-day from all parts of Scotland to do honour to his memory. Above double that number have come as spectators to witness the scene. There has been no assembly like this at Stirling since the day when the army that fought at Bannockburn assembled under this Craig."

Mr. Dodds took part in this extraordinary national demonstration, and spoke at the banquet that followed the spirit-stirring proceedings of the day. Sir Archibald Alison, as chairman, proposed the usual loyal toasts with more than usual eloquence, and, in a regular speech, did ample justice to the toast of the evening, "The Immortal Memory of Sir

William Wallace." That learned sheriff and eminent historian while dwelling on the heroic character and imperishable achievements of Wallace, took occasion to show that the independence of Scotland, due mainly to Wallace and Bruce, was really not an injury, but an immense benefit to England. Scotland and England, which were united in 1707, on equal terms, as sovereign nations, have both been stronger and happier ever since, and form practically one glorious and powerful realm; free from all rivalry but what is useful and honourable.

To Mr. Dodds was reserved the perilous honour of speaking near the close of the banquet. His subject was "Scottish Nationality," and though nearly all the previous speakers had touched upon it, he contrived to invest it with the fascination of fresh and genuine eloquence. The speech he made was one of his happiest efforts, and was received, according to the reporters, with "great and enthusiastic applause." After adverting to "the inextinguishable pugnacity of the Scottish mind," he went on to say: "There are some people who still dispute upon the rival claims of Bruce and Baliol to the throne. Over the coffins of John Knox and of Queen Mary, I need not say what fierce contentions are still carried on. The battles of the Covenanters and the Royalists are still fought with unabated zeal and acrimony. Most of even our greatest men are but the objects of a divided homage. But there is one name which

silences all controversy ; there is one man in our history before whom all Scotsmen stand calm, reverent, and reconciled. That name, that man is William Wallace. We all feel that he was connected with no party, and engaged in no party work ; that he belonged to the privileged few who found or save nations, and whom posterity venerate with unmixed and undivided homage. I repeat, he is the highest and purest symbol of Scottish nationality."

He concluded his brilliant harangue in these words : " Our nationality is but another guarantee for the peace and security of the whole Empire. Our love of freedom and independence is now a strength not a weakness to England. Every nook of British ground is sacred in our eyes. Should ever any daring invader touch the queenly brow of England, he would soon hear the voice of the North swelling with the old cry, *Nemo me impune lacessit*. If the foot of the foe shall never be planted on the gray rocks of our Abbey Craig, neither, so long as we have breath to draw, or blood to shed, shall it ever be planted on the white cliffs of Dover. Scottish nationality is not weakness, not jealousy, not dissension, but one of the main pillars and supports of the whole British Empire."



CHAPTER VII.

SCOTTISH LITERARY INSTITUTE. KOSSUTH. POPULAR LECTURES. PROPOSED LECTURES ON THE CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES. ESSAY ON "SCOTTISH LYRICS AND SCOTTISH LIFE." PUBLICATION OF "FIFTY YEARS' STRUGGLE OF THE SCOTTISH COVENANTERS." LECTURES ON THE REFORMATION PERIOD OF SCOTTISH CHURCH HISTORY.

IN "The Scottish Literary Institute," originated by Dr. Rogers, Mr. Dodds for some time took a special interest. He thought it might be the means of usefully bringing together literary men connected with Scotland, and contributing to the relief of such of them as had fallen into a state of indigence. The first anniversary meeting of the Institute was held at Glasgow in November, 1857, and was attended by a promising array of members. Mr. Baillie Cochrane, the chairman, made a very eloquent speech in praise of Scottish genius and the objects contemplated by the Society. Professor Blackie advocated the cause of Scottish University Reform with which his name had been so honourably identified. Mr. Dodds, as a leading member, proposed as a toast, "The Literary Progress of the Scottish People." With singular vividness did he expatiate on a

theme which he had made peculiarly his own. Speaking of the freedom the Scottish people had long enjoyed, and the uses which they made of it, he said: "For this perfect freedom they repay the State, and more than repay, they strengthen, support, and beautify it, by their steadiness, orderliness, peaceable deportment, and rational and manly obedience to the laws. A favourable contrast this to the frivolous and frantic outbreaks of the drilled populations of the Continent, drilled as scholars no less than as subjects. As a small illustration of the wide and varied sphere of literature in which even the humblest of our country people move, I may be allowed to mention that my first reading of Milton was from the book-shelf of a common blacksmith. I was first initiated into a knowledge of the globes and of geography by a ditcher in a little hamlet. My first spell at astronomy and electricity was in a manuscript written by a plain farmer, who also constructed telescopes and electric machines. I first heard of Goethe by a forester's wife getting me when a boy to read to her 'The Sorrows of Werter'; and I was introduced to the wonderful exploits of Don Quixote by a ploughman in one of the lonely and secluded valleys at the foot of the Cheviots."

The Institute did good service in calling public attention to the great question of the Reform of the Scottish Universities. But for a variety of reasons, which need not here be specified, it failed to strike its roots in Scotland, and

after various attempts at remodelling and reconstructing it had been made, it ceased to exist. Probably the gravitation of Scottish literary talent to London, the great mart of literature, as well as of commerce and politics, had as much to do with its failure as any other assignable cause. It has been virtually succeeded in London by the "Grampian Club," also projected by Dr. Rogers, and more likely to enjoy a prolonged vitality.

I must here mention Mr. Dodds's friendship with Kossuth during the great patriot's residence in London. Writing to me in June, 1856, he says: "From various reasons I have come into very close contact with Kossuth, as near the soul of the man as such a man can ever be approached. And his historic grandeur only rises the closer the view. Such is the beautiful, I had almost said the divine, simplicity, that is, the perfect comprehensive unity, of those transcendent natures amongst men. And then the sparkles at times of Magyar dignity, of the wild Asiatic spirit! I have seen pathetic instances of this. Something would occur drawing from him a few fierce ringing words, as if he were still the 'Kossuth Lajos' of Hungary; and then a sudden check and droop of the eye, as if a voice within whispered, 'Hush, poor, powerless exile.' "

In one of the articles, chiefly sketches of eminent characters, contributed to the *Scotsman*, and which attracted general attention by their remarkable brilliancy, Mr. Dodds

delineated Kossuth with life-like truth, and in a spirit of enthusiastic admiration. Kossuth was to him very much a man after his own heart, who seized hold of his imagination, while inspiring him with boundless affection. He had also a profound sympathy with the Hungarian cause, as with the cause, indeed, of all oppressed nationalities. A copy of the *Scotsman* containing the article was sent to Kossuth, and here is his reply to a letter Mr. Dodds had addressed to him on the occasion :—

LONDON, 3rd April, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have shown my wife your letter, as also your article in the *Scotsman*. The paper had been mailed to my address previously, and my wife was the first to read it, and call my attention to it. I have no words to say how deeply we were touched by it; both of us. Though I am very far from believing that I deserve anything like what you say, and though the humble ambition, the only I know of, of endeavouring to do my duty to the best of my modest abilities is certainly not deserving of any praise, still I do not hesitate to confess that your article acted like a cheering sun-ray in the night of our adversity; such is the halo of unfeigned affection and sincerity that lightens the expression coming straight from your heart, so full of noble emotions, and so indulgent in overlooking defects, and in heightening the work of plain

common honesty into the merit of virtue. It was like a balm on a burning wound. I forgot to blush at the unmerited praise, so much good did your affection do my heart. My thanks, and my wife's thanks, for it. From some similarity of expressions about the growing importance of lectures you happened to use in your letter, we had some idea that the article was your production. I am very glad to know that such is the case.

You say Saturday, 5 o'clock. You shall be welcome, heartily welcome.—Yours affectionately, KLOSSUTH.

Shortly before the date of this letter, Mr. Dodds had been in communication with Kossuth on the subject of popular lectures as an obvious and excellent means of influencing public opinion. He wished to see the eloquent Hungarian turn his gifts to account in this line, and urged him to think favourably of the matter. A few sentences of Kossuth's reply to him on the subject of public lecturing may here be given:—

“Your letter gave me peculiar pleasure. It is just of such a nature as I expect from my friends and well-wishers who desire to assist me by kind advice and friendly co-operation in earning by honest labour the means for the subsistence and education of my family. Indeed my lectures at the Spa-field schoolroom were a trial step in that direction, delivered not so much with the view of pecuniary

reward as to try whether the English public is not tired of hearing the earnest words, perhaps words of rebuke, from the poor exile. I have since that time received several invitations from several parts of England, and, taking the advice of my friends, especially of Sir Joshua Walmesley, I have come to certain resolutions about lecturing in public. Under such circumstances, your offer to endeavour quietly to mature and to work out my idea of lecturing could not but be very agreeable to me, and I should be glad to see you and to talk with you about this subject in the course of the present week."

As to Mr. Leigh Hunt, Mr. Dodds rendered the most valuable personal and professional assistance to Louis Kossuth; and in all matters of this kind, nothing could be more pure and disinterested than the motives that guided his conduct. His admiration of genius and patriotism in misfortune was with him something like an overpowering passion. His sympathy with genuine intellectual power, and with all that is lofty and generous in human character was exquisitely keen. Most of his extant correspondence, and the general tenor of his life, testify to this feature of his moral nature. Wherever he had an opportunity of showing his sympathetic ardour in the cause of truth and liberty, he was ready to make all efforts, and even to brave all odium in taking his line of action. Nor was his an evanescent or impractical enthusiasm; he could not only admire and

sympathise with noble men, but could set about helping them in a prosaic and business-like way.

It has already been seen that Mr. Dodds, falling in with the fashion of the times, and acting upon his own views of popular enlightenment, gave some of his spare hours to public lecturing. His lectures on the Covenanters had been so successful that he was induced to prepare a number of others, chiefly on historical subjects. One of the first of these, and one of the best, was on Savonarola, which was delivered before the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, as well as in many provincial towns. He also prepared two lectures on the "War of Italian Unity," in which he drew life-like portraits of Garibaldi, Cavour, and Victor Emmanuel, and gave a most animated account of the great struggle that led ultimately to the triumph of Italian independence. "How England and Scotland met the Spanish Armada in 1558" was another of his popular lectures, and was greatly admired by numerous audiences. There was another called "The Firth of Forth in the Winter of 1559-60." All these lectures were written with much care and with a view to solid instruction as well as to rational entertainment. They were also delivered with great emphasis and spirit; for Mr. Dodds, an orator by nature, was also a master of elocution, and read his productions either in prose or verse with remarkable effect.

Still more usefully to employ his powers as a lecturer, he

proposed at one time to prepare a few lectures, or familiar addresses, on this important question, "How may a plain man know that Christianity is from God?" He was convinced that the answer to this question demanded a method of reasoning skilfully adapted to the popular mind, and that a layman might manage the matter more successfully than a clerical or professional advocate. By this time the fearful doubts which once assailed his mind had passed away. His battle with Romanism and unbelief, at one period of a tremendous character, had resulted in the victory of simple faith. He had bravely prosecuted his own researches. He had explored by himself the foundations of religion; he had called no man and no Church master, but had, single-handed, and under the Divine guidance, fought his way to a calm and settled conviction of the truth of Christianity. Yet, though originally trained up in one of the strictest sects of Scottish Presbyterianism, he declined to identify himself absolutely with that or any other visible communion, and held the position simply of a member of the Church of Christ. Of preachers, while he lived in London, he preferred the older and more experienced to the younger men, whose teaching was less mature, though it might be conveyed in brilliant modern language. The late Dr. Leifchild he specially admired as a Christian teacher and a man of worth and wisdom.

In a letter to Mr. Hunter, of date May, 1858, he thus

develops his ideas about these proposed lectures on the Evidences of Christianity :—

“ I have of late years been much impressed with the feeling that, besides the active infidelity at work amongst our population, there has been an increasing *slip-shodness* amongst professing Christians, a want of realising to themselves why they believe, while they just float sleepily down the stream ; and hence Christianity has lost much of its living power. And hence again the prevailing laxity which we have had so much reason to lament, in personal deportment, in commercial transactions, and in many other things. There can be no remedy, but we must just *rot*, as France seems to be doing, unless Christianity takes a more vital, rational hold of our nation. I wish particularly to address young men, who in these days of enterprise and rapid locomotion are hurried from scene to scene, and launched into places far removed from home, where they are apt to be seduced and ruined in consequence of never having seriously thought over the question, ‘ How do I know Christianity to be from God ? ’ ”

“ You know I am neither fanatic nor sectarian, too little of either to please whimsical and denominational people ; but I consider that the civil salvation of our country depends upon a Christian revival, that is, a revived conviction, and an inward profound faith, that Christianity is God’s word to man. I am the better witness, too, because in my

time I have struggled through all the shades and labyrinths of doubt, and it is by hard fighting that I am what I am. I therefore understand well the springs of doubt, and my sympathy is not *against* the doubter, but rather with him, as a wandering brother, in order that I may persuade him that yonder is the sun to guide, not the *ignis fatuus* to mislead him."

But this project, though applauded by his friend Dr. Rogers, did not meet with all the encouragement he expected from his other friends in Stirling, where he proposed that the lectures should first be delivered. He appears, therefore, to have given up the idea before he had made any great progress in the work of literary preparation. The failure of this scheme, inspired by the highest of motives, is certainly to be regretted, as the projected lectures would not have failed to be fresh and original, though simple, contributions to the Christian argument.

Though Mr. Dodds never became what is called a "Magazine writer," he occasionally contributed papers to works in which a friend was specially interested. In 1857 he wrote for Dr. Rogers' "Modern Scottish Minstrel" an essay on "Scottish Lyrics and Scottish Life." That essay is a very unique production, and is to a large extent composed of a perfectly idyllic picture of the "Good Duke James of Roxburghe," a nobleman who, after reigning for some years with rare benevolence in his princely castle of

Floors, near Kelso, departed this life at the patriarchal age of eighty-six, lamented by the poor and lowly as few dukes have ever been. He had succeeded to his dukedom when somewhat advanced in life, after a memorable and protracted litigation ; but he spent his last and best days in giving employment to the poor on his estates, making all his servants happy, and causing the land around him to smile with new peace and plenty. Mr. Dodds, when a boy, had sometimes got his ear pinched by this king of Tweedside ; his venerated grandfather was treated by that king as a personal friend. His imagination, therefore, is fired and his heart is melted, as he describes the court of Floors, the joyous band of retainers that gathered round it, the frequent holidays that saw the great and the small brought together on the green before the castle, and the good duke, who occasionally danced with the most retired rustic maiden he could find, acting as the grand presiding genius of the scene. The whole forms an exquisite paper, full of truth and poetry, though there is in it, like a fly in a piece of finest amber, the unaccountable blunder of attributing to Wordsworth two famous lines of Chevy Chase.

In 1861 Mr. Dodds published “The Fifty Years’ Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters, 1638-1688.” This work consisted of his lectures on the Covenanters, in an expanded and corrected form. The lectures, he confessed to his

friends, had cost him a world of trouble ; he had ransacked for them a whole department of the State Paper Office, had consulted in his investigations some fifty or sixty volumes, and had often toiled at the task of composition till one or even two o'clock in the morning. When the volume was being prepared for the press a similar variety of labour was gone through, so bent was he on giving freshness and accuracy to his narrative. The work, published first by an Edinburgh firm, was very favourably received, and more than justified the author's fame as a lecturer. It was afterwards transferred to a London publisher ; and from first to last it has run through several editions. It is generally admitted to be one of the best books on the subject published in modern times, or indeed at any former period. The life-like accuracy of its sketches of the leading Covenanters and their persecuting opponents has struck every impartial reader. Indeed, the work is more a series of biographies, with picturesque descriptions of events and the scenes in which they occurred, than a regular and connected history. The insight of the author into the men and the times he undertakes to describe shows a true historic genius ; while the glow of his narrative, and the striking imagery that is ever at his command, bespeak the spirit of an orator and poet. He never disguises his deep sympathy with the Covenanters, and always speaks of them as profoundly sincere, even when mistaken, as men of like passions and

infirmities with ourselves, yet genuine religious patriots and valiant pioneers of modern British liberty. But while he takes the Scottish Presbyterian view of their characters and struggles, he writes of them like a philosopher and statesman of the present day. His is not a blind devotion to the noble old Covenanting cause. He aims rather at an intelligent appreciation of the men who upheld that cause, and, according to their light, defended it at the risk, or at the cost, of life itself.

It was at one time Mr. Dodds's intention to prosecute still further his researches in Scottish ecclesiastical history, especially that portion of it which relates to the rise and progress of the Reformation. He actually, with a view probably to the issue of another volume, prepared two elaborate lectures on "The Crisis of the Scottish Reformation, 1557-1560." These he delivered at Moffat, in 1863, with great applause. "The audience," says a local reporter, "was spell-bound as he detailed with the vividness of pictures the chief events of that glorious epoch. He described Mary of Lorraine, Mary Queen of Scots, the Duke of Chatelerault, Maitland of Lethington, and other Lords of the Congregation, in words which made them almost seem to take life and bodily presence. Of Knox himself, the chief figure of his *tableaux*, every one could catch the very impress, and realise the very presence, from two scenes he described most effectively, the one in which the words, 'John

Knox is come' are uttered in the Church of the Greyfriars, and the other presenting the preaching of the Reformer at Stirling. He clearly explained the state of Europe, and specially of Scotland, the efforts made by Knox, with the difficulties his schemes encountered ; and often he made the heart thrill and throb as he unveiled the course of Providence in our history. He exhibited a remarkable power of impressing his hearers with a weird feeling of reality. It was not merely the dim shadowy ghost of the Past that he called up, but its very self. As by some inexplicable magnetic influence, he carried one away whithersoever he would, without any apparent effort, more irresistibly than any other eminent lecturer of the day." This is high praise, but not unmerited. In his best moods, when lecturing on a subject that appealed to the higher feelings, Mr. Dodds exhibited all that living action and transporting power which give the true orator an irresistible sway over his audience. He was never so much at home, never felt and spoke so like a man inspired, as when he introduced upon the scene the noble and picturesque though somewhat stern worthies of Scottish Church history.

Even in introducing the Covenanters to a London audience he stirred up that enthusiasm which springs from sympathy with heroic struggles for liberty. At the beginning of 1865, he was requested by the Rev. Newman Hall to deliver a lecture on the Covenanting times in Scot-

land, and to read, by way of illustration, a selection of his Lays, at a Monday evening meeting of the congregation. The entertainment was a splendid triumph. An audience of 3000 people listened in breathless attention both to the prose and the poetry of the lecturer, except when they could not restrain their sympathetic emotion. On various other occasions Mr. Dodds gave in London a similar lecture, with suitable poetical illustrations, and always with decided success. Had considerations of emolument chiefly swayed him he might have turned his popular lectures of this kind to profitable account. But, though never a rich man, and for a large period of his life having a numerous family dependent upon him, he was no adept in attending to his own pecuniary interests, but let slip many excellent opportunities of honourably adding to his income. Yet the success of the popular reading of his Covenanting Lays increased his desire to publish them in a small volume, with appropriate notes and illustrations. He actually made considerable progress in maturing such a literary project; but from that inexplicable irresoluteness which in matters of this kind often came over him, he never took the final step, and let his enterprise of pith and moment suddenly drop.



CHAPTER VIII.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE "OAK." LIFE OF DR. CHALMERS. WITHDRAWS FROM GENERAL SOCIETY. FAMILY LIFE. SCENES OF HIS HOLIDAY RECREATIONS. GROWING LOVE OF NATURE. OVERTWORK AND FAILING HEALTH. CLOSING YEARS AND LAST DAYS. DEATH AND BURIAL AT DUNDEE. CONCLUSION.

IN 1868 Mr. Dodds contributed a few striking papers to the "Oak," one of the publications of his friend Dr. Rogers. Two of these are highly characteristic, one entitled "Henry Brougham, *in Memoriam*," and the other a sketch of Mr. Gladstone. Of Lord Brougham, the idol that entranced his youth, he says: "In ubiquity, in universality, he distanced all his contemporaries. They selected each his stronghold to attack, or his bastion to erect. Brougham poured his fire of destruction everywhere, and everywhere also were the marks of his hammer and chisel to be traced, trying to reform and to renovate. *Hansard*, thou heavy-looking Memnon's stone ! thou wast vocal through all these years, as if touched by the morning sunbeam, with the music of his wonderful discourses, full of eloquence, argument, invective, knowledge, patriotism, and humanity, full

of magical phrases which the people caught up as a refrain, of principles and sketches of policy which he could only half develop, but which others have had the time and the skill to adapt and realise."

The article on Mr. Gladstone is written *con amore*, and with singular prescience. It appeared nearly a year before that statesman became Prime Minister. The following passage, therefore, is not only a fine piece of criticism, but has a touch of the prophetic :—" He brings to every subject an active and subtle mind, vast knowledge, and thorough official experience. He has watched almost every political question of the day from its first germ up to its present stage of growth ; nothing comes upon him by chance or surprise. He never acquiesces or rests in conclusions, even in his own conclusions, but is ever probing them and revising them, and trying their strength. He is a friend to Plato, and of course more a friend to Gladstone, but most of all a friend to truth. Whatever his opponents may insinuate, certainly the public now accepts his changes and conversions, which are always forward, never backward, as springing from a conscience daily better informed and more enlightened. His inconsistencies are only taken for marks that he is growing wiser. . . . Whatever changes have passed over him, in one thing he is unchanged, he examines every subject in the light of a divine law ; and it is this ethical, this Christian principle of judgment, which he always pursues, either expressly or

tacitly, that often illuminates his speeches with a moral sublimity beyond the reach of oratory or rhetoric. In fine, he is a well-trained and accomplished politician ; he has been an able and efficient administrator ; latterly he has been giving proof of that rare faculty, the power to devise and found practical schemes, to realise his ideas, in other words, the power of fruitful legislation. Such have been his past characteristics, his past performances. He will soon be on his trial, whether he is to be the guiding statesman in the new era on which we are evidently entering."

Mr. Dodds's second and last publication of importance appeared in 1870. This was called "Thomas Chalmers : a Biographical Study." He had projected a series of similar "Studies," to consist mainly of appreciative sketches of eminent men of this century. He had certainly many qualities fitting him for such a task, such as subtle analytic skill, a fine power of word-painting, and a keen sympathy with everything morally grand and noble. He had also an exquisite eye for the winning weaknesses of great men, and the beautiful simplicity of genius. He could touch with genial hand the odd, the fantastic, and the humorous, as well as the solemn and the pathetic in human life and character. But this new project was not destined to call into play his peculiar powers. He was forced, indeed, by failing health and spirits, as well as by the pressure of outward circumstances, to give up more than one of his

cherished literary schemes. Chalmers was the first and the last picture in his projected gallery of modern great men.

And a very complete and carefully-finished picture it is. The artist had a life-long love and reverence for Chalmers, had heard him make one of his greatest speeches, and had watched his splendid philanthropic career from its meridian to its sudden close. It was with peculiar delight, therefore, that he found at last an opportunity of letting the world know what he thought of the greatest pulpit orator, and one of the noblest men of his time. In a small octavo volume, of 400 pages, he contrived to sketch in brief and bold outline the life of Chalmers, to describe the various fascinations of his genius, and to expatiate on the amount of noble work he did in his day. He acknowledges his great obligation to Dr. Hanna's admirable Life of the great Christian philanthropist; but he introduces into the earlier part of his biography a quantity of interesting new material, for which he was mainly indebted to his friend Dr. Rogers, a native of Fife, and well acquainted with the land of Chalmers.

While thus occupying much of his leisure in literary work, and occasionally lecturing before popular audiences, Mr. Dodds gradually withdrew from nearly all society, and confined himself to the loved and loving circle of his own family. Some of his relatives and oldest friends complained

of this retirement ; but at length the failing state of his health formed a fair excuse for it, and strengthened the habit into which he had fallen. What is called literary society, though at one time fairly open to him, he never much affected, and at last even the attractions of his circle of friends and neighbours lost their power to draw him from his own fireside. But his home was a happy one. He was blest with a wife who sympathised with him in all his efforts, and under all his trials ; who understood him, and knew well how to soothe the irritations that sometimes disturbed his equanimity. He was also surrounded with loving children, to whom he was passionately attached, and in whose thorough education he took more than a fatherly interest.

One of these children, speaking of her father's home-life during his later years, says : "While a hard-working, conscientious business man, he was a most devoted father to his family, who all owe the best part of their education to him. His duties in his own house, combined with the literary work he carried on in a very earnest spirit, kept him ever busy, and ever wishing that the hours of labour could be doubled. I never saw him *resting*. If for a spare half-hour he sat in his arm-chair among us, his speech was ever of the good, the useful, the noble. He listened to our smallest remarks, and made use of them to speak to us of the higher aims of life. He patiently sifted the dross from our talk, and gladly found in it the smallest grains of gold. We spent our Sab-

bath afternoons in looking closely into the Bible with him, and my wonderful reverence for special portions of the holy book is the direct result of his teaching. On other days we read with him books of travels, poems, plays, in fact, almost every kind of literature. Speaking from my larger experience of life, I can safely say that I never saw such devotion to his children in any father. He always loved *youth*, and to the last had admirable patience with and infinite pity for the follies of the young, as well as the most tender kindness in listening to the expressions, however vague and crude, of their hopes and aspirations. He used to say to us that the noblest and best ambition a man can have is, that when he is gone, his children and his children's children should speak of him with love and reverence ; and then he would add, 'I desire nothing better for my monument.'

This is a picture not overcoloured by the faithful hand of filial affection. Mr. Dodds, with all his professional acuteness, his official hardness, and occasional explosions of "sacred wrath," was to the last a gentle and generous man, preferring the pure enjoyments of domestic life to the dubious pleasures of general society. It was only when he found himself in a small circle of congenial friends that his conversational powers appeared to the highest advantage. Yet most people, when first in his company, were amazingly attracted by his conversation. He had the art of speaking well on subjects which people near him best knew, or most

liked ; and, while he spoke to the purpose himself, he drew out the powers and the knowledge of others, and thus abjured the sovereignty of monologue. He could also tell stories like other men, but in this department he sometimes failed. His stories were not always fresh, and he was apt to tell them too minutely and circumstantially, as if his hearers required to have them explained. He forgot that a story or anecdote is hardly worth telling unless its points shine out under the thinnest drapery of words. But on the whole he was, in his happiest moods, a most admirable talker. Wit, humour, literary anecdote, love of nature, and knowledge of the world, especially of human character, enriched and variegated his conversation in a way that often carried people off their feet, and made them wonder at the amount and variety of his intellectual stores.

Like all hard-working professional men in these days, Mr. Dodds had his annual holiday in the country ; and during his season of recreation his supreme delight was to have his family around him. He usually bent his steps to Scotland for rest and pure air, the sight of old friends, and a fresh acquaintance with Nature. At one time he is found luxuriating with his wife and children at Colvend, a charming district near the mouth of the Nith and on the shore of the Solway, that arm of the sea which always powerfully affected his imagination ; then, one autumn, he and his are at Moffat, one of the finest of Scottish watering-places, so

excellent are its mineral wells, so superb its surrounding scenery; in another autumn he pitches his family tent at Cockburnspath, near Dunbar, where the bold scenery of the coast, Dunglas Dean and Castle, with its fine old chapel, Ravenswood Tower and Fast Castle, all immortalised in the "Bride of Lammermoor," inspired him with boundless delight, and woke within him the spirit of poetry. Of the towns he most loved to visit on business or pleasure may be mentioned Stirling, Dundee, St. Andrews, and Dumfries, in all of which he had warm friends, who were always prepared to give him a hearty welcome. His love of the country seemed to grow as he advanced in life. One of the books he most read and enjoyed during his later years was the old-fashioned but still delightful "Natural History of Selborne." Speaking of Mr. White's volume in a letter to Mr. Hunter, he says, in a fine flow of spirits: "O that I had studied swallows, snails, and grasshoppers as he has done ! He has suggested to me a journal every one should keep, especially in the country, 'Nature Notes.' What a rich journal you might have had by this time in such a treasure-house of Nature as Craigcrook is ! Won't you yet begin to note down all about your flowers, trees, bees, robins, black-birds, and other creatures ? What a record to read from in an afternoon to a poor smoke-dried city man like me ! How I should gloat over its pages ! After all, what are all translations of Goethe and Schiller to such a volume ? Words-

worth felt this to the core of his sympathetic heart when he exclaimed so irreverently, as some think, so sensibly as I think,

Up ! up ! my Friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double :
Up ! up ! my Friend, and clear your looks ;
Why, all this toil and trouble ?'

Now, my dear friend, for my return, do have ready a daily record of your pansies, potatoes, and pigs, anything which nature has placed all glowing on the table spread before and around you."

But during the last ten years of his life, in spite of his abstemious habits and annual periods of recreation in the country, Mr. Dodds's health sensibly declined. Indeed, before he had been many years hard at work in London, he occasionally felt himself affected with dizziness, and other symptoms of a diseased or irregular action of the heart. At times he was alarmed about himself, as if his life might be suddenly cut short ; but for years his naturally robust constitution bore him safely through sundry rather serious attacks, and enabled him to do a vast amount of work with apparent impunity. As life advanced, however, and the demands upon his energies did not diminish, his bodily strength became visibly impaired, and his family grew anxious about the general state of his health. The toils of his profession, often of an anxious kind, severe literary work, which frequently kept him up to a late

hour of the night or an early hour of the morning, as well as the exposure, excitement, and fatigue connected with public lecturing, gradually weakened his bodily powers, and aggravated the ominous symptoms from which he had begun to suffer. He became, it may be said, another victim of that prevalent and fatal disease of the day, overwork. He wrought his brain too vigorously, and had too few intervals of rest. The usual consequences followed, heart disease, with its serious concomitants, and the painful apprehensions to which it gives rise.

Yet up to 1874, and after he had reached his sixty-first year, he continued, on the whole, to enjoy such health as enabled him to attend to business, to enjoy himself with his family, and even to continue his favourite occupation of lecturing in public. By this time, however, his dear friends, Mr. Mackie, of Bargally, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Whitehead, and Professor Craik were no more; and their loss, with various other bereavements, rendered his visits to Scotland much less attractive than they once had been. He had frequently a presentiment, amounting almost to a conviction, that his life would be suddenly shortened, and this, if it failed adequately to restrain his mental labour, had the effect of making him still more domestic and retiring in his habits. But in the summer of 1874, when, in spite of all the loving care of his family, his health became very weak and precarious, he received a kind invitation from Mr. T. Thornton, solicitor, Dun-

dee, to pay him a lengthened visit, in order to try the effect of perfect rest and change of air. Mr. Thornton and he had long been closely connected by ties of business and friendship, and the invitation, so thoughtfully given, was at once accepted.

After spending a very happy day with all the members of their family that could be collected together, Mr. and Mrs. Dodds left London for Scotland on the 24th of August, and arrived comfortably at Carlisle, where they spent the night. Next day they went on to Dundee, where they were most kindly received by Mr. Thornton. Mr. Dodds was soon able to confer with that gentleman and other friends on matters of business, and seemed to improve daily in strength. After spending a few pleasant days in Dundee, he and Mrs. Dodds went up the country to Glenisla, to pay a visit to Mr. Thornton's brother-in-law, Mr. Peter Hean. Mr. Hean, who had considerably invited them to share with him for a while the delights of his residence in the Forfarshire Highlands, was a most attentive host, and did everything possible to make the invalid's sojourn at Glenisla of a refreshing character. Mr. Thornton and his son joined the party, and helped to make the visit still more enjoyable. Reading, writing, talking by turns, and in a moderate measure, strolling out into the open air to explore and enjoy the romantic scenery of the place, inhaling with conscious enjoyment the pure mountain air, and abandoning himself in his own fashion to the prized

society of dear friends, and the elevating spirit of the surrounding scene, Mr. Dodds made rapid progress in what all around him considered the path of recovery. He made several excursions with his friends to interesting places in the neighbourhood, one of which was Forter Castle, a ruined stronghold of the ancient clan of the Ogilvies. On the party being entertained at tea by the housekeeper of the tenant of the place, he was introduced by the Rev. J. Simpson, of Glen-isla, to that worthy woman as the author of the "Fifty Years' Struggle of the Scottish Covenanters;" and great was her delight on the occasion. She eagerly declared that she had read the book over many times.

In perfect peace and rest did Mr. Dodds pass a precious fortnight in this delightful corner of the Grampians. His mind was in a quiet and contemplative mood, ready to entertain the exalted thoughts inspired by the natural grandeur around him, and to ascend to the higher region of spiritual ideas and aspirations. The place, the air, the friends near him, the simple pleasures, and the tranquil employments of the hour were all to his taste, and seemed expressly fitted to prepare him for that passage into the unseen world which to him was so nigh at hand. What secret communion he enjoyed meanwhile with his God and Saviour cannot be stated here with any certainty. But he habitually rested on the great doctrines, and cherished the sublime hopes of the Christian religion. He had long before this won

for himself, won by hard intellectual toil and many a spiritual struggle, an assured conviction that Jesus Christ is the Divine Son of God and the only Saviour of sinners.

Returning refreshed and invigorated to Dundee, he was able to visit a number of friends, to attend to some matters of business, and even to touch up several of the lectures that still occupied a portion of his leisure. In conferring with Mr. Thornton on some important professional matters which gave that gentleman not a little anxiety at the time, he showed a clearness of judgment and a vigour of intellect never surpassed in his best days. He was also led to think that his ailment had taken a favourable turn which might end in his restoration to a fair measure of health. On the evening of Friday, the 11th of September, he applied his wife's hand to the region of his heart, and said, "Do you feel how much stronger it beats? I think if I am spared to get over this, I will make an old man yet." On the afternoon of the next day, Mrs. Dodds left for Edinburgh, on the understanding that her husband, now so much recruited, would join her early in the following week.

Almost immediately after his wife's departure, he walked out of town in the direction of Lochee, for the purpose of calling on the Rev. Archibald B. Connell, the United Presbyterian minister of that place, whose acquaintance he wished to make, and to whom he had received a letter of introduc-

tion. But when, after his solitary walk, he had almost reached the door of Mr. Connell's house, he was seen suddenly to fall down, and was immediately taken up in a state of unconsciousness. He expired before he could be carried into the house he had expected to enter. Mr. Connell and he had been quite unknown to each other, and had never consciously met in this world. Even after the unknown stranger had lain dead for hours in Mr. Connell's house, that gentleman did not know his name. A more pathetic, a more tragic visit was never paid by one poor mortal to another in this world. "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

Dr. Lennox and Dr. Pirie, of Dundee, having pronounced the cause of death to be apoplexy resulting from heart disease, the body was conveyed to the house of Mr. Thornton, where it lay till it was committed to the grave. Mrs. Dodds received the terrible news in Edinburgh by telegraph, when in a lonely lodging; her daughter, Mrs. Deschamps, and her husband, both of whom she had expected to meet, having not arrived from London. She left early next morning for Dundee, which she reached in the forenoon when the church bells were ringing. All the members of her family at that time in this country soon followed, to share, and, if possible, to lighten her overwhelming sorrow. The widow and her children found the features of the departed not darkened and disfigured, but only subdued and chastened by the hand of death. His eldest daughter,

Mrs. Bontor, thus describes what met the eye in the chamber where the body was laid : "The grand repose of my father's face in death we shall never forget. The seal of everlasting life seemed set on his brow. His face was so noble and beautiful that our quietest, happiest hours during that awful time were spent in the room where he lay. He was to the end, and even in death, as he had always been in life, the head and stay of his wife and children."

The funeral took place on Wednesday, the 16th September, and was attended by a number of the most distinguished citizens of Dundee, many of whom had long been connected with the deceased by the ties of friendship. Among those present were Mr. P. H. Thoms, of Aberlemno, Mr. G. H. Thoms, Sheriff of Orkney, Shetland, and Caithness, Mr. Yeaman, M.P., Mr. George Rough, ex-Provost of Dundee, Mr. W. O. Dalgleish, of Mayfield, Mr. Leng, of the *Dundee Advertiser*, with Mr. Thornton and other friends. The Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Free St. Paul's, and the Rev. A. B. Connell conducted the funeral service, and duly adverted to the solemn pathos of the scene. Dr. Wilson had known Mr. Dodds in his early college days, and could well recall some of the first efforts of his oratorical powers. He was now by a touching providence called to offer up prayer over the lifeless remains of his long-remembered friend, and to follow them to the place of burial. The interment took place in the Eastern Necropolis, a cemetery which Mr. Dodds had

often admired when in life. It was noticed that the funeral procession passed close to the "Morgan Hospital," that noble institution which, but for the singular energy and skill of the deceased, might never have enriched the charities of Dundee.

A suitable monument was in due time erected over the grave by Mr. Dodds's family. With the name of the departed, and the dates of his birth and death, there are inscribed upon it his favourite word, *PATIENTIA*, and the following brief, but expressive sentences:—"One who loved his fellow-man." "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come." "He shall enter into peace."

It may here be proper to state that Mr. Dodds left a widow, four sons, and three daughters, all of whom still survive. His eldest son, James, long held a high mercantile position at Bombay, and is now settled at Yokohama, Japan. All the daughters are married. Two of the younger sons reside in London, where their mother also has her home.

This Memoir would certainly not be complete without the following extracts from a letter of Mr. Thornton, of date 1st July, 1879. That gentleman was one of the most loved and honoured friends Mr. Dodds ever possessed, and by his signal kindness at the time of their great trial he has earned the deepest gratitude of Mr. Dodds's family. A finer tribute

could not be paid to the memory of the departed than in the following words :—

“ He was a dear friend of mine. His annual visits to me are among my most pleasant memories. His genial humour and fund of anecdote made him a pleasant companion, and he left behind him always a savour of something higher and better. Nobody could talk long with James Dodds without being penetrated by a sense of his intellectual strength, and enthusiastic devotion to everything noble and good. In our quiet walks, and in the daily intercourse of domestic life, the hidden springs of his nature were often revealed. Full of knowledge regarding Covenanting times, he could, in familiar conversation, make the worthies of the persecuting days live over again. Enthusiastic, too, in the cause of liberty all over the world, he made the names of Cavour and King ‘ Honest Man,’ as he loved to call Victor Emmanuel, become familiar in my home as household words. I felt his death very deeply at the time, and as his familiar form and beaming face recur to my memory I feel more and more the loss of one whose friendship and faithfulness were among the most precious of my possessions. . . .

“ His name will for ever be associated with the vindication of the rights of the town of Dundee under the testamentary settlements of the late Mr. Morgan, and the consequent erection in Dundee of Morgan’s Hospital for the maintenance and education of the children of poor burgesses. To

him also must be attributed no small share in the promotion of the bridging of the Tay, which has since been carried out so successfully. In conjunction with myself, he brought forward Bill after Bill for authorising the scheme, and he looked forward to its accomplishment with unflagging interest and perfect faith. He was not destined, alas ! to see its completion. But from the grave in which his body lies the silvery Tay with its noble bridge may *now* be seen ; and those who lay a wreath on the sod which covers his ashes, or pluck a flower from the sward beside his tomb, may, while they remember James Dodds as the eloquent delineator of the Scottish Covenanting heroes, and the impassioned advocate of Italian liberty, also look around and couple with his name the promotion of one of the greatest engineering conceptions of his friend Sir Thomas Bouch, and the establishment of one of the best and most useful charities on the banks of the Tay."

Little more need be said about the life and character of the subject of this Memoir. The narrative now given will be considered sufficient to show what kind of man Mr. Dodds was, what he actually did, and what in more favourable circumstances he might have done. That his individuality was very pronounced, and that he possessed not only high mental powers but many of the qualities of genius, will probably be admitted by all who peruse these pages ; while those who intimately knew him will certainly acknow-

ledge the literal truth of all that has here been said of his extraordinary faculties. It is true that the high aspirations of his youth were never realised, that he never was permitted to enter that forensic arena where most probably he would have won the greatest triumphs; but he displayed in one important department of the legal profession all the powers that go to form a first-rate lawyer. His legal acumen and professional knowledge were of a very high order; and in all his dealings with his clients he uniformly acted like a man of incorruptible integrity. He was one who consulted less his own interests than the interests of others, and was infinitely more ready to wrong himself than anybody else. He was also capable of prodigious industry and application when important matters of business demanded his attention; and the signal professional triumphs he gained were due as much to his moral energy as to his legal erudition.

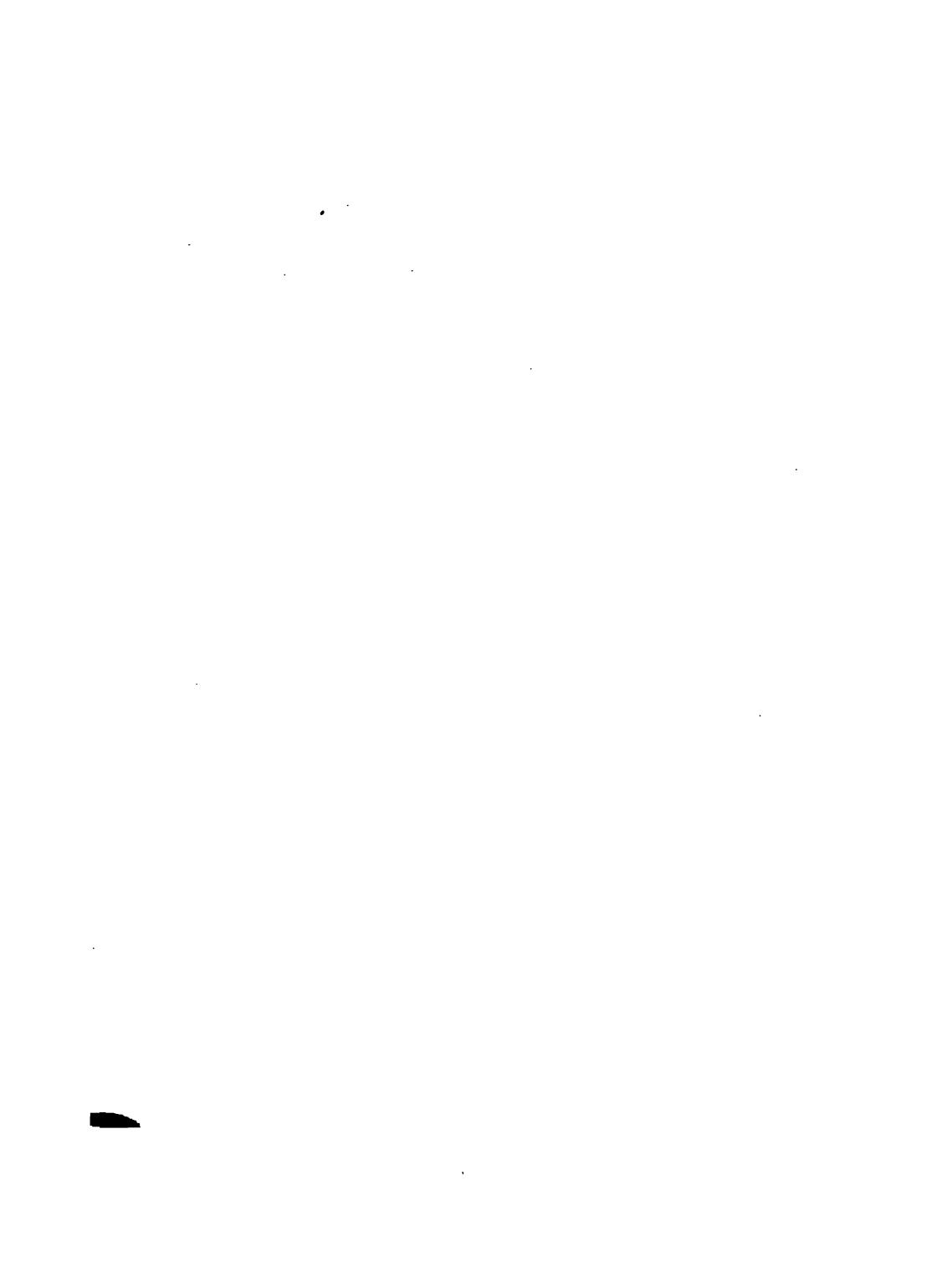
Many of his friends always regretted that his splendid oratorical powers never found a worthy field for their exercise. When he spoke at a public dinner, on a political platform, or in a popular assembly, he carried all before him by his commanding eloquence. His oratory was certainly coloured with the hues of poetry, and was often instinct with sentiment and passion; but it usually contained a sound body of argument, and was uniformly directed to the noblest ends. He was a philosophic

thinker, as well as a poet and orator; and although a man of advanced views in many important subjects, he generally stated them with wisdom and moderation. Those who knew him best believed that he was fitted to make a great figure in the House of Commons had he found the requisite opportunity; but, perhaps fortunately for himself, he was finally content to remain in a comparatively humble walk of life, remote from the struggles and disappointments of political ambition. He found special delight in literary work; but while he wrote powerful and spirited prose, he poured out his soul most fully in his poetry. Most of his poems indicate the hand of a true master of the lyre; but his "Lays of the Covenanters," which form the most precious portion of this volume, betray the true fire of genius. These burning tributes to the immortal religious heroes of Scotland were greatly admired by many competent judges when they first appeared more than thirty years ago. They are now presented to the public for the first time as a regular series of poetic illustrations of Scottish History, in the hope that their merits will be generously recognised by many readers who have hitherto been ignorant of their existence.

It was at one time contemplated to append to the following "Lays" a number of Mr. Dodds's miscellaneous poems, chiefly those which relate to scenes connected with memories of the Covenant. But, in the meantime, his fugitive pieces,

some of them of a domestic character, and all of them remarkable for their poetical spirit, are withheld from the public. This volume is strictly indicated by its title; but an opportunity may yet be given for its moderate enlargement.





LAYS OF THE COVENANTERS.

A series of brief biographical sketches of the chief personages celebrated in the following Poems will be found at the end of this volume. The geographical terms and local allusions contained in the different pieces will be understood without much difficulty by the intelligent reader.

LAWS OF THE COVENANTERS.

THE DEATH OF ARCHIBALD, FIRST MARQUIS OF ARGYLE,

WHO WAS EXECUTED AT THE CROSS OF EDINBURGH IN MAY, 1661.

FROM Mull to Cantire a low wailing is heard,
And the banks of the Aray lament for their lord ;
For the pine which so long hath withstood every blast,
From the top of the mountains down headlong is cast.
The name of Argyle, which was first in the land,
Is a skiff dashed to pieces on Jura's rough strand.

As a prisoner he stands where he once sat a peer,
And the lowest to fawn are the loudest to jeer ;
And there scowl in fury his deadliest foes,
And the whisper goes round them, "Remember Montrose."
But so false are the charges, the slanders so base,
That back on their authors they roll with disgrace,

His judges, tho' void of compassion or shame,
Can fasten no treasonous blot on his name :
In discomfited rage for a moment they pause,
Like a hawk when the prey hath escaped from his claws.

But who at the portal knocks loudly and fast ?
'Tis a herald from Court, let his message be passed.
All eyes are enkindled, "'Tis a pardon !" Ah no !
From a source so polluted no mercy can flow.
'Tis a casket of letters which Monk hath betrayed,
As the price for his basely won coronet paid,
The pent-up dissembler, the heart-rotten knave,
With a warrior's plume, but the soul of a slave.

May his name stand for aye a reproach and a scorn !
May gem and green leaf from his forehead be torn !
In their curses let minstrel and annalist join,
They, the champions of honour, and vowed to her shrine.
Be the faults of the dead in their dark house concealed ;
But baseness like this even death cannot shield,
That the living may learn, and may shrink from such crime
When they hear the deep curse of the far after-time.

Thus the handle is given, no matter how weak,
It serves them their long-hoarded vengeance to wreak ;
Then peal, ye hoarse trumpets ! the traitor proclaim,
Argyle be attainted in honours and name.

His doom is pronounced with an ill-suppressed joy,
For the dragon is loosed, and his watchword, "Destroy!"

In meekness he rises, no fear on his cheek,
And raises his hand with a motion to speak :
" My sovereign, this hand placed the crown on his brow,
To a crown more exalted he hastens me now..
In an earthly king's grace ye will grant me no part,
But the grace of the Lord hath been sealed to my heart :
When He comes to the judgment, and all eyes shall see,
No such measure be yours as ye mete unto me ! "

He awaits in his dungeon the doom thus decreed,
Nor doth God cast him off in the hour of his need :
In patience he waits, with a conscience at rest,
And a courage which never till now filled his breast.

Not his the bold heart that leaps up for the fray,
Nor the fierce daring game that ambition will play,
Nor the patriot's wild fervour, that bursts like a flood,
And will ransom his country or perish in blood.
Yet, if self made him waver and wind on his road,
If he crept where a bolder would nobly have strode,
If a close worldly spirit was mixed with his zeal,
Still his ends were his country's, her rights and her weal ;
Long was he the bulwark, in trouble and woe,
Her dear-cherished faith to preserve from each foe.

And now all his frailty and fearfulness fly,
Serene and composed he prepares him to die :
For they who are true, though in weakness and fear,
New strengthenings shall find as new struggles appear :
And Argyle, though faint-hearted in prosperous days,
Now looks upon death with a hero's firm gaze.
Thus the mist may have hung over mountain and glen,
And gloominess shrouded the dwellings of men ;
Yet the sun ere he sets through the gray clouds may soar,
And sink in soft lustre behind Bein-an-or !

On the morning of blood all his friends gather round,
But his hopes ever brighten, his comforts abound ;
And his foes shrink abashed, who came thither to smile
O'er the last abject looks of the fallen Argyle.
No ! calm as a martyr, not cowed like a thrall,
He falls as a prince of the people should fall !

“ I could die like a Roman, but rather will die
As a Christian, whose charter is sealed in the sky.
My doom may seem stern, but the time will soon show
That soundest they sleep who are sleeping below.
To sin or to suffer shall soon be your choice,
And the elect shall weep, but the world shall rejoice :
The pang of a moment shall blow me ashore,
Where they sin not, nor suffer, nor grieve any more ! ”.

The death-blow is struck, and the bloody head shown,
As a trophy to hang on the newly-raised throne :
And the poor mangled corse, in its red currants dyed,
By a few faithful clansmen is borne o'er the Clyde :
In the vaults of Kilmun they have laid him to rest,
Where Loch Holy bemoans to the hills of the west.

Ah ! the furnace is heated, and fierce is the flame,
And peer, priest, and peasant must pass through the same
Till Scotland be seven times tried like the gold,
And return to her faith and her love as of old :
Then on her long night shall arise a bright day,
And the sign, when a standard shall float in Torbay !



THE DEATH OF JAMES GUTHRIE,

EXECUTED AT THE CROSS OF EDINBURGH, 1ST JUNE, 1661.

SLOWLY, slowly tolls the death-note, at the Cross the scaffold stands :

Freedom, law, and life are playthings where the Tyrant's voice commands :

Found in blood your throne and temple ! foretaste of glorious reign ;

Though the heavens were hung in sackcloth, let the Witnesses be slain !

'Tis the merriest month of summer, 'tis the sweetest day in June
And the sun breathes joy in all things, riding at his highest noon
Yet a silence, deep and boding, broods on all the city round,
And a fear is on the people, as an earthquake rocked the ground

Slowly, slowly tolls the death-note, at the Cross the scaffold stands ;

And the Guardsmen prance and circle, marshalled in their savage bands ;

And the people swell and gather, heaving darkly like the deep,
When, in fitful gusts, the north winds o'er its troubled bosom
sweep.

Now the grim Tolbooth is opened, and the death-procession forms,
With the tinsel pomps of office, with a vain parade of arms ;
Lowly in the midst, and leaning on his staff, in humble guise,
Guthrie comes, the Proto-martyr ! ready for the sacrifice ;
Guthrie comes, the Proto-martyr ! and a stern and stifled groan
Runs through the multitude ; but patiently he passeth on ;
And the people stand uncovered, and they gaze with streaming
eyes,

As when of old the fiery chariot rapt Elijah to the skies.

On his staff in meekness leaning, see him bend infirm and weak ;
Man in youth, and old in manhood, pale and sunken is his cheek.
And adown his shoulders flowing, locks grown prematurely gray,
Yet the spirit, strong in weakness, feels not languor nor decay ;
And a loftiness is on him, such as fits a noble mind,
Like the oak in grandeur rising, howsoever blows the wind ;
On his lip, though blanched with vigils, sits the will to dare or die,
And the fires of grace and genius sparkle in his cloudless eye.

“ This frail and mortal flesh, I give it
Freely to the Lord of all !
Were my limbs of brass and iron,
”T were an offering far too small.

Life is only ours to serve Him ;
And our term of service done,
Death for Him and for His Covenant
Is an honour cheaply won.

“ Not as felon, nor as traitor,
Whatso evil tongues proclaim,
Am I hither come to suffer
Every brand of outward shame.
Fixed and serious in my purpose
Where the hand of God was seen ;
Yet in all things have I laboured
To preserve my garments clean.

“ I was loyal when this kingdom
Bowed to Cromwell’s haughty frown ;
Few would own the royal standard
All defaced and trodden down.
Then the flatterers who doom me
To suffer in the street,
Whined and fawned like stricken spaniels
Round the Lord Protector’s feet !

“ Constant to my Prince, and constant
To the vows we both had taken,
Faithful to his right I stood, when
By his summer friends forsaken.

Loyal am I, free to render
Unto Cæsar Cæsar's due,
Tribute, custom, temporal honour,
And obedience leal and true.

“But the King who reigns in Zion,
High o'er every earthly throne,
Shall I flinch from His allegiance ?
Or my solemn vows disown ?
With uplifted hands I swore it,
When the Nation joined in band,
Monarch, magistrates, and nobles,
And the peasants of the land !
Though I knew by signs and shadows,
That my life-blood must be spent
In the work and in the warfare,
Struggling for the Covenant.

“Welcome scaffold ! 'tis a Bethel,
Angel-wings are hovering here ;
Welcome ladder ! thou shalt lift me
Far beyond this cloudy sphere.
Ah ! thou Daughter of my people !
Sweet and lovely at thy birth,
When the throes of Reformation
Shook the old astonished earth,

What a blight is on thy beauty,
Since thou hast forgot thy truth,
And the joys of thy bright morning,
The sweet espousals of thy youth !

“ Thou shalt suffer ! God’s true Gospel
Shall be darkened, and a brood
Of locusts overspread thy valleys,
Leaving neither flower nor food ;
And the wild-boar from the forest
Rush on thy defenceless home ;
For thy watchmen do not warn thee
Of the woes about to come ;
But they slumber, drugged with wine-lees,
Or they quail in carnal fear ;
And thy bondage shall continue
Till the Lord Himself appear,
Till He make His right arm naked,
To avenge His people’s wrongs !
And restore the mournful captives,
With everlasting songs.

“ Here my pilgrim’s staff is broken,
All my bands are now untied ;
I die to live with Him for ever,
Who for my salvation died.

Faith, which long hath groped and wavered,
In this world's uncertain light,
Leaping from its mortal prison,
Now is passing into sight.
Earthly cares and human contests,
Inward pangs and darkness cease,
Now, O Lord ! dismiss Thy servant
Into everlasting peace !”

He hath spoken ! Seal his sentence ; little boots it what ye do :
He hath spoken ! and recorded darker, heavier doom on you !

Hurry on the doom assigned him, by the minions of your State,
Rend the head from off his body, fix it on your city-gate ;
Let the Lyon-Herald taint him, be his arms reversed and torn ;
Be his earthly goods confiscate, let his household wail and mourn ;
Crush the Spiritual by the Carnal, answer Conscience with the
sword,

By the dungeon and the scaffold force submission to your word ;
Good and Evil, Force and Freedom, let them close with deadly
yell !

'Tis a warfare old as Satan, deep as the abyss of Hell !

He hath spoken ! and his words are not water on the ground ;
Years may vanish, but his warnings shall in all their truth be
found ;

He hath spoken ! and the Nation to its inmost soul hath heard,
And the withered bones are shaken by the breathings of his
word ;
And, though dead, his guiding spirit in the land for aye shall
dwell,
And Oppression's boasted strongholds shiver at the mighty spell.



**SHARPE OFFERING A BISHOPRIC TO ROBERT
DOUGLAS.**

OCTOBER, 1661.

IN his chamber the aged pastor sat,
Whilst autumn winds were sighing,
And the shades of a dull October eve
On Salisbury steeps were lying.
His face bore the trace of a lofty line,
Though with age and care grown hoary ;
And he mourned the Church's sad decline,
And the land's departing glory.

There came to him one of wily speech,
With an eye so glazed and leering,
That never looked with steadfast gaze,
But from side to side was veering ;
And proffered him wealth and priestly power,
The noblest to attend him,
Obedient tools to work his will,
And sharp swords to defend him.

“ Away with all thy sinful baits,
 Back to thy masters bear them !
 Hence with these Babylonish rags
 To the backs that crouch to wear them !
 What ! with untempered mortar daub
 The wall which God hath broken ?
 Or nurse the fig-tree which is cursed
 By the word which the Lord hath spoken ?”

Sharpe rose in haste, while his sullen soul
 With secret rage did smoulder ;
 But as he passed, the stern old man
 Smote him heavily on the shoulder.
 “ I see what ravelled threads are twined,
 And the hand that turns the spindle ;
 And vows which highest Heaven hath heard
 Hell’s breath like tow shall kindle.

“ What though the ark of God be spoiled,
 And sheep and shepherd smitten ;
 And Ichabod be on the doors,
 Where Bethel once was written ?
 The ground is clear, the game is set,
 And *thou* art stript to win it ;
 THEN TAKE ST. ANDREWS’ MITRED POMP,
 AND THE CURSE OF GOD WITHIN IT !”

THE CHRISTIAN EXILE.

ALEXANDER SMITH, PREVIOUS TO THE REFORMATION, WAS MINISTER OF COLVEND, NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE NITH.

SCENE.—Shetland. Winter of 1664. The Exile discovered upon a rock at the sea-side, reading in Romans, chap. viii. ver. 28, to the end. The Evil Spirit near him, but invisible.

THE EXILE.

(*Reads.*) “ We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things ? If God be for us, who can be against us ? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ? ”

EVIL SPIRIT.

'Twas sweet upon the Criffel,
When the summer winds were still,
And golden streams of sunset
Came floating o'er the hill !

'Twas sweet, from off the Criffel,
To gaze across the foam ;
Then glide into the valley,
Where stood thy peaceful home.

THE EXILE.

Ah, fond deceitful heart ! why dost thou roam ?
Where God appoints thee, is not that thy home ?
Nature would chain us to some one loved spot ;
Grace makes the heart yield gently to the lot.
On wends the pilgrim, rough or smooth his way,
For earth hath nought to charm him, or dismay.
From every shore, and under every zone,
Straight is the passage to my Father's throne :
In life, in death, my great Redeemer lives,
And mine the all things which He freely gives.

(Reads.) "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God elect ? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is eve at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

EVIL SPIRIT.

Dost hear the Urr? What music
It murmurs to the dell,
Where thy children merrily sported,
Where all thy people dwell!
Nor wife nor child is near thee,
Thou pinest in hopeless woe:
Thy home is on the ocean-cliff,
Where the wintry tempests blow,
Where the wild waves roll in thunder
Up the rock-girt Ronas Voe!

THE EXILE.

Hush, ye rebellious thoughts that madly stir!
Hark to the voice of Heaven's own messenger,
"Who shall accuse the elect? Who shall condemn?"
No weapon that is formed can injure them:
Theirs is the helmet which no blow can pierce,
Theirs the great spell that binds the universe.
Then howl, ye tempests! rave along the steep,
The peace within lulls all these storms asleep.
Earth! yield no food. Sky! with thick darkness frown,
Rich is heaven's manna, bright the eternal crown.
Wife! I have loved, and love thee! Children! take
These tears shed sadly, fondly for your sake:

Our griefs shall knit us faster, and the love,
Divided here, shall purer burn above.
Exile from home, I still am nigh to God,
And death but leads me to His blest abode ;
They only reap who faint not in the furrow,
They shall return with joy who sow in sorrow !

(*Reads.*) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long ; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

EVIL SPIRIT.

'Tis but a drop from the inkhorn,
Thou shalt be free once more !
And the Solway sound thy welcome
From this waste and howling shore !
Thy God hath thee forsaken
Afar amidst the sea :
Why suffer in His service
Who cares no jot for thee ?

THE EXILE.

Get thee behind me, Satan ! now I know
'Tis thou, vile serpent ! that dost wound me so ;

But though a breath could waft me hence, that breath
Shall ne'er be drawn by me : Exile and death
Are light : Sin is the only fearful thing.
Thou hast not cast me off, my God ! my King !
Thou that didst shine in Patmos, Thou dost shine
Even on a heart so poor, so cold as mine !
These towering rocks are Ebenezers, reared
To mark where Thou hast graciously appeared
To strengthen my weak soul : these waves that roar
In mighty majesty along the shore,
The sound of many waters that attend
Thy goings forth. In awe, in faith I bend.
Earth dwindleth ; time and sin and death are past ;
Alpha and Omega ! Thou first, Thou last,
Thou Ever-Living One, that reign'st above !
Oh for an angel's harp to sound Thy love !

(Reads.) " For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ! "



BATTLE-SONG OF THE PENTLANDS.

THIS day must set in blood !
Each true man to his post !
Strike for Christ's Crown and Covenant,
And God be with His host !

Though few and faint we be,
And the tempests wildly blow,
Yet here, upon this naked heath,
We fearless dare the foe.
Long hath the tyrant raged,
And the people have been dumb :
Sword of the Lord ! avenge the past,
And free the time to come !

Not for the fading leaf
That decks the conqueror's head,
Nor sinful thirst for blood or gold,
Our feet have hither led :

We combat for our rights,
For our heritage Divine.

O Lord ! look down from heaven in love,
And visit this Thy vine.

Our homes in blackness lie,
And our pleasant fields are waste,

And our fathers and our brethren
Like beasts of prey are chased.

Our priests are driven forth,
And our temples are defiled ;

And the house of God must now be sought
Far in the desert wild.

And now that, front to front,
We have met the tyrant's horde,

Woe be to him that slacks his arm
Or turns away his sword !

Better to fall in fight
For the charter of our land,
Than pine in bondage and in fear,
A crouching, hunted band.

And if we fall, this hill
Like Lebanon shall grow,
And other times in gladness reap
What we in trouble sow.

And where our ashes rest,
Beneath the heather sod,
The youth of Scotland shall renew
Their Covenant with God.

This day must set in blood !
Each true man to his post !
Strike for Christ's Crown and Covenant,
And God be with His host !

DIRGE OVER THE SLAIN,

Who were interred in Rullion Green the Day after the Battle.

ALLELUJAH ! praise the Lord !
Be His holy name adored !
They who suffer for His Word
Shall walk with Him in glory.

“Earth to earth, and dust to dust !”
Earth ! to thee we now intrust
The slaughtered bodies of the just,
A sacred treasure given !
Here, upon the mountain side,
They boldly stemmed the tyrant's pride,
Heroes fought and martyrs died
For fatherland and heaven !

Where they fell shall be their grave,
Meetest burial for the brave ;
Though the wintry tempests rave,
Calm shall be their slumber !
Souls redeem'd from guilt and pain,
Ye who suffered also reign,
Joined to that immortal train
Which no tongue can number !

Nor myrrh nor aloes have we here,
Mourning pomp, nor costly bier ;
Rude must be their sepulchre,
Rude the stone placed o'er them.
But safe each mangled corse shall lie :
The brightest watchers of the sky
Shall watch them, with unfailing eye,
Until their Lord restore them.

By the Nith and by the Ken,
By Clyde and Ayr, through hill and glen,
Where dwelt these gallant Westland men,
May mourning hearts find gladness !
Holy Spirit ! comfort-giver !
Shall the sword destroy for ever ?
Wilt Thou not this land deliver
From misery and madness ?

Brothers ! on Carnethy's head
Sinks the sunset, dusky red :
O'er the turf which wraps the dead,
 A parting tear we offer,
Leave the martyrs to their rest,
Within the mountain's frozen breast !
An hour still comes for all oppress'd,
 A crown for all who suffer.

Allelujah ! praise the Lord !
Be His holy name adored !
They who suffer for His Word
Shall walk with Him in glory !



THE AGED COVENANTER.

HIS DEATH ON HEARING OF THE DEFEAT AT THE PENTLANDS.

O LORD ! remember in Thy love Thy persecuted flock,
Who flee for refuge from the wolf to mountain and to rock !
And if, to right their cruel wrongs, the sword they nobly draw,
Oh ! may it flash like cherubim's, in brightness and in awe !
Our lily flowers of Presbytery by swinish hoofs are soiled ;
Our ancient Scottish liberties by lawless hands despoiled ;
The peaceful hearths at which we sat, our children on our knee,
Are ringing now with the tramp and curse of a heathen soldiery.

“ Hey for the boots and the thumbikins,
But and the gallows tree !
And hang the Whigamore loons
Where Whigamore loons should be !
Round by the edge of the Pentlands,
Up on the Rullion Green,
I trow we spilled their sour milk,
And tapp'd their Covenant spleen.”

What shoutings, fiercer than the blast? These shouts! I
know them well!

'Tis the fiendish rout and revelry of the troopers of Dalziel!
His ruthless nature only knows to ravage and to slay,
And many a godly family are fatherless this day.
In all the glens of Galloway a wailing voice is heard,
And sore-afflicted Annandale mourns like a mateless bird;
And Rachel for her children weeps, whilst Herod quaffs his
wine,
Yet ever turns a ghastly eye to Bethlehem's awful sign!

The foxes have their hiding-place, and burrow safely there,
The partridge finds some leafy nook, free from the fowler's
snare;
But shade or shelter none is found our poor oppressed to save,
Hamlet or city, house or field, mountain or forest-cave.
Where faithful pastors fed their flocks, false curates give them
straw,
And gobble up all carnal things with foul insatiate maw:
A sav'ry feast for the Romish Beast black Prelacy prepares,
The jackal only tracks the prey which the huge old lion tears.

“ There's a pack for the Haddo's Hole,
There's a pack for the Old Tolbooth;
And we'll blind the eyes of Presbytery,
And grind her snarling tooth.

Hey for the boots and the thumbikins,
But and the gallows-tree !
And hang the Whigamore loons,
Then harry the West Countrie ! ”

Oh ! bear me to my bed in haste, my heart hath burst in
twain,

When green and goodly oaks are rent, shall withered stocks
remain ?

As Eli fell, when Aphek's field beheld the ark depart,
So Scotland's broken Covenant hath broke my trembling heart.
I thought to sleep amid mine own, by Scalpa's rushing wave,
But now mine aged bones have found the Greyfriars for a
grave :

And where, in nobler monument, could my poor dust be stored,
Than there where Scotland's martyr-host are waiting for their
Lord ?

“ Huzza for the crown and the mitre !
We'll pledge them in merry brown ale :
'Life's but a span, and a soldier's a man'
Then drink till our pockets fail !
And Old Tom will find us in booty,
With fines from the West Countrie churls,
Who'd cock up their greasy blue bonnets
Above all our dukes and earls.”

A bloody sword gleams far and wide, and the priests of Baal
shall tread

In rage upon God's heritage, and righteous blood be shed :
But, hark ! the mighty angel's voice proclaims from sea to
shore,

That Babylon is fallen, is fallen, is fallen to rise no more !
From gifted Wishart's bed of fire to gracious Guthrie's death,
The righteous blood shall be required, in wonders and in wrath :
The dainty surplice shall not screen, and the Council shall sink
dumb,

And the sceptre quiver like a reed, when the days of vengeance
come.

Some precious ties encircle me, some mem'ries of the past,
An old man's heart, though dimmed, hath gleams the brightest
at the last,

My little homestead, and the kirk, and Orkney's sea-voice
stern !

But cease, my passing soul ! why thus with earthly visions
yearn ?

Yet must we part, spouse of my heart, mirror of love and truth,
The solace of my life's decline, companion of my youth ?
How sweet hath been our fellowship through long, long change-
ful years !

We meet in heaven, where death is not, nor warfare, change,
or tears !

Now earth, and time, and creature-thoughts are fading from
mine eye.

O man ! thou art alone with God, prepare thyself to die :
The faintest and the feeblest of the followers of the Lamb,
'Tis by the sovereign grace of God I am now what I am !
The veil is parting, flesh is failing, light or path is none !
God of the feeble, guide of the feeblest ! Glory ! peace ! 'tis
won !

“ Into Thine hands I do commit my spirit ; for Thou art He,
O Thou Jehovah, God of truth, that hast redeemed me ! ”



THE BATTLE OF AIRSMOSS.

FOUGHT IN JULY, 1680.

'TIS morn, the broad red sun
Gleams through his misty covering ;
The plover and the wild curlew
On fitful wing are hovering.
The wearied ones have laid them down,
If but a moment they may rest ;
Earth ! they shall soon be all thine own,
Then take them gently to thy breast !

Scarce have their eyelids closed
When the watcher's warning cry is heard,
And each with a sudden bound
Starts from sleep, and grasps his sword.
Along the dark, outstretching heath,
Sullen and fierce the troopers come,
With helmets' glare, with cries of rage,
With loud harsh clang of trump and drum.

One moment, stern and still,
The martyrs view them gathering nigh ;

One moment, with an earnest look,
Each on his brother turns his eye.
But Danger's hour is Freedom's birth,
No fear or craven look is there;
All circle round the man of God,
Who calmly pours their latest prayer.

CAMERON'S LAST PRAYER.

Shepherd that didst Joseph lead !
Helper in the hour of need !
Treader in the winepress ! we
Lift our waiting eyes to Thee !
On rush the foeman like a flood,
And the desert gapes for blood.
Lord ! spare the green, the ripest take !
Hear us for Thine own name's sake !

Here stand we, on the last retreat
That earth will yield our weary feet ;
From rocky cave to mountain chas'd,
From mountain to the desert waste ;
From the waste to heaven we soar,
Sinless, painless evermore.

Lord ! spare the green, the ripest take !
Hear us for Thine own name's sake !

With a longing strong and deep,
With a bridegroom's joy we leap ;
We have panted for this hour,
To grasp the tyrant in his power ;
And write in blood our legacy
To nations struggling to be free.

Lord ! spare the green, the ripest take
Hear us for Thine own name's sake !

Through the floods be Thou our guide,
In the flames be at our side ;
Purge us from our drossy clay,
Wash our mortal stains away :
Christ our King hath pass'd before ;
Bloody sea, but blessed shore !

Bearer of the eternal keys,
Bear us through our agonies !

How long, O Lord ! shall Zion lie
A scorn to all the passers-by ?
Shall godless heart and gory hand
For ever scourge Thine ancient land ?
Awake, arm of the Lord ! 'tis time,
The earth is drunk with blood and crime,
And crush the thrones that will not fear Thee
Smite the lands that will not hear Thee !

Now for the onset ! Brothers, kneel !
Lord, give us faith and holy zeal ;
Loose the ties that gently bind us,
Heal the hearts we leave behind us ;
May we die as die the brave,
And Freedom yet spring from our grave !
Treader in the winepress ! we
Rise to be evermore with Thee !

By the black and weltering swamp,
A small green mound uplifts its brow,
'Twas the altar whence their incense rose :
'Tis their camp and battle-fortress now !
The startled hare hath fled the brake,
No lark remains to greet the morn ;
The raven only flaps his wing,
And whets his beak on the gnarled thorn.

“Down with the cut-eared dogs !”
The troopers gnash their teeth and cry :
“God is our refuge and our strength !”
Is the brief and sternly-breathed reply.
With hunger, toil, oppression worn,
Their numbers few, their weapons rude,
In firm and close array they stand
Against that ravening multitude.

The blades like lightning flash,
And volleyed thunders rend the sky ;
The war-steeds paw the heathery sod,
Aloft the glittering pennons fly.
But, as from Ailsa's sea-beat cliff,
The howling surge is backward toss'd ;
Even so these fierce battalions reel,
Stemmed by that firm, devoted host.

Though few and scant equipped,
Right forth they burst with one loud cheer,
And many an empty saddle tells
The fate of many a cavalier.
Before that storm of peasant strength,
Dark sweeping as the northern blast,
White plume and glittering pennon whirl,
In one wild wreck and ruin cast.

High on his gallant roan,
From rank to rank Rathillet flies ;
Where he rushes terror spreads,
Where he strikes a foeman dies.
But what avails the lion's might
When crowding hunters round him close ?
Pierced from behind, Rathillet falls,
Amid the yell of deadly foes.

“Shame on the coward arm !”

Young Chryston cries, and, like a dart,
Flies to avenge Rathillet’s fall ;

An eagle, young and strong of heart,
Whose nest is on the Calder banks ;
On fierce and fiery wing he rushes,
And in one glorious hero-burst,
Forth from its fount his young heart gushes.

And Cameron, soul of fire !

What quenches others quickens thee !
In the tumult still his voice is heard,

“For Scotland’s faith and liberty !”
Priest of the outcast ! down he sinks,
The shepherd ’mid his slaughtered flock.
Brave one ! thy Master calls thee home,
Then soar through blood and battle-smoke !

Long rolls the unequal strife,
And men and horse like foam are driven ;
And shouts and shrieks, curses and prayers,
Ring wide through all the vault of heaven.
At length, in threefold numbers ranged,
On press the foe with rage and pride,
Till one by one the martyr-band
Drop by their faithful pastor’s side.

Like reapers dropping down,
Their sheaves around them thickly strewn ;
So drop the soldiers of the Cross,
By numbers crushed, and toil alone.
Silence again is on the heath,
The war-steed's neigh comes faint and far.
Ye chosen ones, to glory rise !
The harp, the crown, the morning star !

By the black and weltering swamp,
A small green mound uplifts its brow ;
'Twas their altar, 'twas their battle-ground,
'Tis their martyr-spot and death-bed now !
There, shrouded in their own heart's blood,
Their bodies rest upon the field,
Till pious hands shall make their tomb,
And lay them where their truth was sealed.

For their rights and faith they fell !
They fell that these might ever stand.
Men of a race that shall ne'er forget
What they owe to that dauntless martyr-band.
Then rear for them no sculptur'd pile,
Set a rough grey stone on the lonely heath !
Not a hind or child in Scotland all
But can tell right well *who* lie beneath !

CARGILL TAKEN PRISONER AT COVINGTON MILL,
ON THE CLYDE.

JULY, 1681.

I.

THE Clyde rolls on majestic, beneath a July moon ;
The sky is calm and cloudless, well-nigh as bright as noon ;
And far into the heavens Cothwhan uplifts his height,
With his young and floating tresses, all bathed in streams of
light :
Like some angelic watcher, to watch with radiant eye
O'er holy Cargill's slumber in the miller's cot hard by.

II.

The blessing rest upon thee, and deep, serene repose !
And the cloudy pillar hide thee from the fury of thy foes !
With strong heart hast thou wrestled in the fulness of the day,
And thy God shall be thy glory when the earth-lights die away.
Whoso are true and faithful unto their latest breath,
Bud when the false ones wither, and greenest look in death.

III.

But see those forms that darkly from the distant heights appear;
That hollow sound, whence comes it, like horsemen trampling
near?

'Tis but the dark wood waving where St. John's Kirk standeth
alone,

And that hollow tramp of horsemen is but the night-wind's moan.
And all is peace and sweetness, the moon looks from on high
On her cradled children smiling with her blessed mother-eye.

IV.

Ah no! 'tis not the dark wood, 'tis not the night-wind's moan,
'Tis the savage troop of Bonshaw that are hither rushing on.
The door is burst, the chamber is filled with steel-shod feet,
And the aged slumberer shaken from his slumbers still and sweet.
He looks at first half-wildered, then meekly riseth up,
And with cheerful heart prepareth to drink his Master's cup.

V.

Across the Clyde they bear him, and to Lanark roughly ride,
While beneath the horse's belly his legs are closely tied.
And loud the jeers and laughter, and Bonshaw yells with glee,
"A blessed day for Bonshaw, a blessed prize to me,
Six thousand merks are clinking on that blessed saddle-tree!"

VI.

By the ancient kirk at Lanark, in the eye of all the hills,
Then spake God's ancient servant, and time the word fulfils :
" I tell thee, cruel Bonshaw, that on high hast built thy nest,
By whom God's Church and people so long have been opprest,
Where now thou stand'st exulting in the greatness of thy lust,
A bloody hand from thine own wild band shall strike thee to
the dust.

As low as thou art lordly shalt thou welter in thy blood,
And this shall be ere yon ash tree again begin to bud."

VII.

And so before that ash tree again began to bud,
As low as he was lordly did he welter in his blood.
A bloody hand from his own wild band did strike him to the dust,
Where then he stood exulting in the greatness of his lust.
By the ancient kirk at Lanark was the mangled carcase laid,
And the word returned not empty which the godly man had said.

VIII.

But gently, like the streamlet that seeks the ocean's breast,
Old Cargill passeth onward to his centre and his rest.
Even as an aged pilgrim, who sadly toils along,
Enters the city gladly at the quiet even song.

IX.

The wise and wakeful virgins, whose lamps were trimmed and
bright,
Went forth to meet the Bridegroom at the mid-watch of the night,
And dreaded not the darkness, their lamps so clearly burned,
But forth they went rejoicing, and with bridal wreaths returned.



RENWICK IN THE COTTAGE OF JOHN BROWN
OF PRIESTHILL.

NOVEMBER, 1683.

A SKETCH.

I.

NOVEMBER winds are loud and chill
Round thy roof-tree, lone Priesthill !
Earth is wound in her shroud of snow,
And the clouds toss to and fro.
All around the moorland's rim
Day is closing dungeon-dim ;
Scarce doth twilight intervene,
Night at once engulfs the scene :
Storm and darkness, fear and danger,
Woe's me for the homeless stranger !

But in Priesthill's humble dwelling,
While without the storm is swelling,

The hearth-stone glows with cheerful heat
From well-dried turf and fragrant peat;
In midst the candle-coal is set,
And flames with many a lambent jet.
The shepherd lads and maidens fair
With busy hands the wool prepare,
And caird and spin the white and black
For hoddin' gray to ploughman's back.
The mother, meek and sweet of face,
With matron charms and inbred grace,
Sits with her first-born on her knee,
Singing her artless lullaby!
Her little step-child, Janet, dear
As daughter of her own she were,
With flaxen ringlets waving light
Around a brow so lily white,
And blue eyes laughing to a cheek
Where rosebuds blow so fresh and sleek,
Sometimes with demurest art
Awhile she acts the housewife's part,
Then, dancing off with nod and beck,
Hangs on her new-found mother's neck.

Old Colly basking in the blaze,
Well hast thou spanned the heights and braes,

And threaded through the whirling drift,
By rough moss-hag and craggy clift,
And homeward brought the bleating herd,
While scarce from the door thy master stirred.
Such human forethought moves in thee,
And more than human constancy !

With sudden start he pricks his ears ;
Is it his master's step he hears ?
Some hours agone he crossed the heath,
Regardless of the frost-wind's breath,
The sweets of Gospel truth to shed
Around a neighbour's dying bed ;
'Tis nigh the time of his return.
No ! stranger feet are hither borne ;
For Colly growls in under tone,
Mingling with the night-wind's moan,
And guards the door with sentinel's frown ;
But Janet kindly pats him down,
And hies her boldly forth to see
Who there in such a night should be.
She soon returns, with looks so bland,
Leading a stranger by the hand,
Whose tatter'd garb and feeble form
Seem all unfit to bide the storm.

She guides him to her father's chair,
Whilst those within their tasks forbear,
Each to bestow, in their degree,
Some mark of hospitality.

The goodwife gives him welcome cheer,
For all in need find welcome here,
The wanderer's home, a resting sweet
To wayfaring and wearied feet ;
And here the poor make daily moan,
And daily leave their benison.
The young from hill and dale repair,
Here is their school and house of prayer ;
Here oft the dead in sin have leapt,
And tears of dawning hope been wept,
And pierced and bleeding souls been bound,
And sliding feet new strength have found ;
And the saints of God, in trial and fear,
Seek the Urim and the Thummim here !

But with her welcome doubts arise ;
For troubled times breed jealousies,
And villain spies on every hand
Glide like serpents through the land.
In cities, midst the throng of men,
In furthest nook and loneliest glen,



On the sea where the good ships fly,
In the haven where they lie,
To the far sequestered cot,
Where roaming beggar travels not,
In bogs which scarce the bitterns haunt,
On steeps that know not bush or plant,
Through tangled forest, pathless waste,
Where the coney ne'er was chased,
By the day which blazons all,
Under midnight's deepest pall,
At the selfsame table fed,
Harboured in the selfsame bed,
They lurk and creep, and watch and mark,
Strike unseen, and shoot i' the dark,
And follow still, with bloodhound's scent,
The children of the Covenant !
Oft they take Devotion's guise,
And, Judas-like, betray their prize.
Thus, rob'd like minister of light,
Satan plies his ancient spite !

When terror stalks by dale and town,
Well may the wife of godly Brown
Feel some misgivings at the sight
Of unknown guest in such a plight,

With haggard mien and uncouth dress ;
Is this from guile or wretchedness ?
Deep in her memory hath she stored
Peden's dark foreshadowing word,
When she and her partner plighted their faith
By the mountain-stream to be one till death :
" Bridegroom ! cherish well thy bride !
Bride ! rejoice thee at his side ;
But keep the linen clean and meet
To be a martyr's winding-sheet."

To hide the throbings of her heart,
And the tear that to her eye would start,
She rocks her first-born on her knee,
And sings his evening lullaby,
Some antique snatches, quaint and wild,
That oft have stilled the cottar's child.

THE MOTHER'S SONG.

" Hush thee, baby ! hush thee,
Till the morning break !
Sweetly may'st thou slumber,
Softly may'st thou wake !
Hush, my little baby,
Till the morning break ! "

“ Where’s the way, mother ?
Whither shall I go ? ”
“ Stay at home, my darling !
The hills are deep with snow ;
And bitter through the hawthorn
The blasts of winter blow.”

“ Where are all the heather-bells
That daddie brought to me ? ”
“ Spring will come, my bonny bird !
With flowers upon the lea,
And big a bower by yon burn-side
For the linnet and for thee ! ”

“ Hush thee, baby ! hush thee,
Till the morning break !
Sweetly may’st thou slumber,
Softly may’st thou wake !
Hush, my little baby,
Till the morning break ! ”

“ Caird the black, and caird the white,
Weave the speckled gray !
Garment meet for man to wear
Through his chequered day ;
But they who wear’t with patience
Shall shine in bright array ! ”

“ Hush thee, baby ! hush thee,
Till the morning break !
Sweetly may’st thou slumber,
Softly may’st thou wake !
Come, sweet spring !
And sweet lark sing,
And thy nest in the moorland make !
The lambs shall leap,
Where the blaeberrries peep,
And softly my baby shall wake !”

II.

The stranger mark ! how altered now !
Whence the flush upon his brow,
And the flush upon his cheek,
And tears that more than language speak ?
As the quick’ning breath of morn
Rustles through the mountain thorn ;
So, whilst the mother’s voice is stealing
O’er his ear, all thought and feeling
Thrill beneath that homely ditty,
Her cradle-song of love and pity !

Fond dreams, lov’d gleams of youth revive :
He sees the home by Minnyhive,

Where erst he felt a mother's care,
Where she would comb his golden hair,
And sing to him some olden strain,
" Fair Margaret," or the " Young Tamlane ; "
Or, when the thickening shades came on,
Some holy history would she con
By the merry evening fire.
He sees again his godly sire,
Remov'd by an untimely blow,
Like the sheltering oak laid low.
He kneels with him in prayer, and now
He wipes the death-dew from his brow ;
But while his tears anew are shed,
He whispers : " Blessed are the dead ! "
Blithe visions, too, now pass before him,
Glad sounds of other years come o'er him :
Dalwhat's melodious murmur swells
By heath-clad steeps and broomy dells,
Where oft the wild-brier's bud he sought,
And caroll'd to the blackbird's note.
O blissful visions ! short relief
To bosoms crushed by wrongs or grief,
A balsam even, for the time,
To the conscience gnaw'd by crime !
Why so swiftly pass away ?
Come not at all, or ever stay !

Delusions all ! unreal and vain !
No, not in vain ; for still remain
The blest ideas thus impress'd,
Which, finding here no place of rest,
Seek it in the realms above,
Where centre perfect truth and love !

While thus his fancy bee-like skips,
And honey from each blossom sips,
The door is open'd : Yes ! 'tis he,
The master of the family !
Sweet to his home as summer gale,
Known and belov'd through all the dale ;
For all revere, and all obey
His holy, patriarchal sway.
Of firm and stalwart frame is he,
And aspect grave, yet mild and free ;
His cheek with hardy lustre glows,
Such as the mountain-breeze bestows ;
And here and there a furrow's trace
Flings its shadow o'er his face.
His locks, now tipp'd with silvery sheen,
Fall o'er a forehead clear, serene ;
And his the blue and glintin' eye
Of Scotland's noblest peasantry.



But as the sun, though sunk from view,
Still sheds a calm celestial hue
Upon some lofty mountain's height ;
So all in him of good and bright
Which Nature's genial hand supplies,
The human-strong, the human-wise,
Is hallowed by a light Divine,
Streaming from the heavenly shrine.

He greets the stranger, and he gazes,
The face some deep emotion raises.
He knows him through his rude disguise,
A brother's love beams in his eyes ;
He doffs his bonnet reverently,
And thus, in tend'rest courtesy,
His stammering tongue hath found a vent :
" The Angel of the Covenant
Take thee underneath his wing,
And thy feet to safety bring !
No prince or peer in Christendom
Were half so welcome to my home ! "

" Tis RENWICK ! Ah ! how changed from him,
Of rosy cheek and graceful limb,
Who but a year before had passed
Some happy days as Priesthill's guest !

Such havoc in so short a space
Have toil, and thought, and watchfulness,
Stormy seas, and travel long,
And adder-stings from the evil tongue,
And the burning spirit's bane,
Hours of rapture, months of pain,
Wrought upon the beauteous youth.
But deeper insight into truth,
Peace that passeth human lore,
Strength and faith unfelt before,
Calmer, clearer, loftier mind,
Earthly passions heaven-refined,
These have come to him instead,
If the roses from his cheek are fled.

Oh ! who can tell the pure delight
Which shower'd its blessings on that night ?
When heart to heart responsive beat,
And soul with soul held converse sweet.
Themes, dearer prized than treasur'd gold,
The labouring tongue strove to unfold ;
And long-pent feelings found their way,
Like well-springs in the month of May.
As husbandman delights to view
The blade refresh'd with vernal dew ;

As the shepherd on the rock
Counts with joy his spreading flock,
Free from taint, and fleecy fair;
As the nighted traveller,
Lost within the forest maze,
When first the morning meets his gaze,
Forgets his weary wandering
To hear the lark and merlin sing,
While the village chanticleer
Proclaims some place of shelter near:
Such, yea, far exceeding this,
Were those joys of holiness
Which around that household shone,
On their hill-side bleak and lone,
While the youthful priest and the shepherd saint
Spoke with heavenliest ravishment
Of God's long dealings with the land,
And the wonders of His hand!
O'er those who spake and those who listen'd
The Rainbow of the Covenant glisten'd!

The pious host, with speech benign,
Where love and wisdom both combine,
Himself by sharp experience taught,
Returns his every inmost thought,

And, like a stream, receives impress'd
Within a clear and glassy breast,
Those eddying joys and fears which roll
In Renwick's more impassioned soul.
The lowlier acts of household care
The goodwife and her maidens share.
She now prepares their evening meal ;
The shepherd lads, with modest zeal,
Bring forth their holiday attire,
And give whate'er his wants require ;
The maidens stooping, homely, neat,
Bring water for his aching feet ;
Whilst little Janet's failing eye
Folds at length in dreams of joy,
With her head so lovingly
Pillow'd on the stranger's knee,
On her parted lips a smile
Enough his sorrows to beguile.
Unearthly splendours light his eye,
His soul is lost in ecstacy :
Back as in a swoon he sinketh,
But his soaring spirit drinketh
At the crystal fount of life,
Pure from human sin and strife,
Where the shadow never flew,
Where the earth-wind never blew,

Where it flows in ebbless tide
From eternal springs supplied !

Peace with you all, O household blest !
Peace with you all, and heavenly rest !
Be peace and rest vouchsafed a while,
Not to relax, but nerve for toil !
A tempest lies before you all,
Already deep to deep doth call ;
But with your sufferings ye shall find
The valiant and submissive mind.
And now your record is on high,
Your recompense is in the sky ;
And what ye sought not shall be given,
Fame wide as is the cope of heaven.
Your land, though late, shall know your worth,
And boast the honour of your birth.
When prince and warrior are forgot,
Or known but as a nation's blot,
Then Brown and Renwick's fame shall be
Remember'd in our history.
When battlefield and palace gay
Sink in oblivion and decay,
The Patriot and the Christian still
Shall pilgrims be to loved Priesthill !

RENWICK'S VISIT TO THE DEATH-BED OF PEDEN.

FEBRUARY, 1686.

THROUGH the small and dingy lattice gleamed the last red
beams of day,
One wintry burst from the setting sun, where the dying pro-
phet lay ;
Where, from his weary wanderings, with toil and suffering worn,
He had come to close his pilgrimage within his native Sorn.

Oh ! rest thee, aged, weary one ! be all thy conflicts past !
Lone dweller in the wilderness, rest calmly at the last !

The change hath touched his countenance, so wan, and fixed,
and cold,
And shrivelled up his frame that was so stalwart and so bold ;
His unshorn locks and matted beard in strange wild clusters
hang,
And the frequent start and shiver tell how near his dying pang.
But bright the sunshine on his brow ! the brow which God
hath given
To those who are His gifted ones, the messengers of heaven !

For his the lofty impulses, the clear, far-sweeping ken,
That have stamped him as a holy seer among the sons of men.

Oh ! rest thee, aged, weary one ! be all thy conflicts past !
Lone dweller in the wilderness, rest calmly at the last !

His eyes are closed, but not in sleep, he murmurs forth a
prayer :

“ That poor and wasted remnant, Lord, do Thou in mercy spare !
The wolf hath burst into the fold, the shepherds they are gone,
In all our hills and valleys round we are not left with one :
O Israel’s Shepherd ! guide the flock, the yearlings gently bear !
That poor and wasted remnant, Lord ! do Thou in mercy spare !
O Sun that shines in Scotland ! there shall be a dread
eclipse !”—

But the words of terror died away upon his feeble lips ;
And the latch is opened softly, and a pale sick youth appears,
Whose term of life hath numbered little more than twenty years.
Though something of the rosy bloom peeps from that faded
cheek,

And those dove-like eyes with tenderness and youthful yearnings speak ;

Yet ye may see that toil and care, and sleepless thoughts have
crushed

The gentle blossomings that might in his young heart have
flushed ;

And youth and strength, and soul and life, as first-fruits, he
hath bound

Unto the altar's horn, and there may they in peace be found.

As he entered, Peden raised his eyes, and asked the stranger's
name,

And what the errand was for which to this lone place he came :
"Father! my name is Renwick, I have come to speak with thee,
To see thee in these troublous times, and crave thy prayers for me!"

The old man's face with something flushed between the scowl
and sneer,

For false reports against the youth were scattered far and near.

"Are you the Renwick that has made such noise throughout
the land ?

Turn round about, and let me view your measure as you stand.
Narrow thy shoulders, frail thy limbs. Slim youth, thy heart
is bold,

If thou dost think that thou alone canst Scotland's Church
uphold!"

"O father ! do not mock me thus. To thee my spirit cleaves.
The railing Shimeis pain me not, but thy least whisper grieves.
The noise and strife are not by me ; my Lord's reproach I bear ;
And in the scandal of His Cross I also have my share :
They seek to drive me from the land, a hissing and a scorn.
O father ! hear and pity me ; my heart with grief is torn !"

The old man softened as the dew, and Renwick's hand he takes,
"Tis a bloody land, a treacherous time ; we walk on asps and
snakes.

Sit down by me, and tell me o'er the story of thy life,
For well I know that cruel words cut sharper than the knife."
He leant upon the truckle-bed ; whilst, keener than a lance,
The old man watched him with an eye, before whose searching
glance

The traitor and deceiver oft like drunken men had reeled,
And all their leper-spots laid bare, so long and well concealed.
But Renwick's pure and noble mind with meekness met the gaze,
With look as sweet as the lark doth greet the morning's first
bright rays ;

And, leaning on the truckle-bed, old memories stirred again,
And rushed upon his parched soul like a summer burst of rain.

He told how, from his mother's womb, he was vowed unto the Lord,
And from his childhood he was taught to lisp the Holy Word ;
What bright celestial glimpses in his youthful dreams he saw.
Then how his tender heart was wrung by the terrors of the law;
What demon-shapes danced round his steps, and held his
thoughts in thrall,
And the candle of the Lord went out, and blackness covered all ;
And all this goodly frame of things was a dry and barren clod,
Till, gasping in his agony, he groaned, "There is no God!"

But as the watchman, spent and chill with watching out the night,

Sees earth again put on her robes of pure and natural light ;
Even so on Renwick's darkened soul the Sun of Righteousness,
With healing on His wings, arose to brighten and to bless.

He told how Scotland's gaping wounds made his young heart to bleed,

And he prayed that God would give him strength to help her in her need :

How 'mid the sobbing crowd he stood who saw old Cargill die,
Then forth he rushed to solitude, and spread his hands on high,
And sealed his mother's vow in heaven, the aged, widowed one ;
The strong in heart, the great of faith, who loved her only son,
Oh ! tenderly, most tenderly ! yet ever longed to see
That where the "Crown and Covenant" led, his post or march should be.

He sought the faithful remnant out, the brave contending band,
Who would not yield to Antichrist dominion in the land,
But homes forsook, and spoiling took, in rocks and caverns lay,
And worshipped there their fathers' God, and looked for coming day,

And made a rampart of their hearts, their life-blood freely gave,
To save the Zion of their souls from being Babylon's slave.

He told how, after prayer and fast, and wrestling with the Lord,

They with one voice had chosen him to labour in the Word ;

How godly men in Groningen had laid on him their hands,
And how the Spirit made him free, untying all his bands.
Through storm and danger and man's wrath, he reached his
native shore,
And still, amid reproach and grief, his Master's cross he bore ;
And he lifted up the standard where the Darmead waters flow,
When Muldron's wild and desolate heights lay thick with drifted
snow,
He lifted up the standard where old Cargill laid it down,
Where Cameron left it as he rose to wear the martyr's crown.
To the hungering souls in Scotland he had broke the bread of
life,
And shunned all innovations and all bitter roots of strife ;
But chief of all, his aim had been to guard with faithful hand
The Gospel's native purity, and the Covenants of the land.
Because he could not dance in step with the piping of the times,
And dreaded all compliances as heaven-defying crimes,
Those that his brethren should have been did all affection
quench,
Nay, cut him from all fellowship even as a rotten branch,
“ Schismatic ! Jesuit ! whited Devil ! ” these were the names
that rung
From the Presbyterian Issachsars who had lost the ancient
tongue ;
And afar in mountain solitudes, no succour, no relief,
He had kept the flock together, in danger, storm, and grief.

While thus he told how best-loved friends were severed from his side,
Tears of deep agony gushed forth, and mournfully he cried :
“ Woe’s me that I in Mesech am a sojourner so long !
That I in tabernacles dwell to Kedar that belong !
My soul with him that hateth peace hath long a dweller been ;
I am for peace, but when I speak, for battle they are keen !”

“ My son ! my son !” with broken voice the dying saint exclaimed,
“ How sore, how undeservedly hast thou, my son, been blamed !
And I, too, have defamed thee, I ; but I am punished now,
When thou standest at my dying bed with clear and open brow,
A chosen vessel of the Lord, which I have sought to shiver :
Lord, from this weak and erring clay make haste and me deliver !
I am an old man, soon to leave this troubled scene below ;
Then stay a while, and speak with me, and pray before you go.”

And he spake with him most cheerfully, with a reverent, tender love,
And he prayed as they alone can pray whose hearts’ home is above !



He prayed that, in His own good time, the Lord would grant release,

And let His servant, worn with age and toil, depart in peace; That all his works and sufferings with acceptance might be crowned,

And the fruit, in ages yet to come, might gloriously abound. The old man wrapt him in his arms, and kissed him, brow and cheek,

Whilst Renwick pressed the clay-cold lips, and strove his love to speak;

But the fountain of his soul was stirred, and he sobbed, in heart oppressed,

And down he sank, and his burning head he laid on Peden's breast.

" Weep not for me, my son ! in peace and quietness I die, As here beneath my brothers' roof in Auchincloich I lie, Not far from Ayr's old murmurings, by bank, and rock, and tree,

Mine eyes shall close safe from my foes, then do not weep for me ! But oh ! the young and tender Vine ! with its first and precious birth,

The ruthless spoiler lays its boughs and promise in the earth.

Long, long and bitter could I weep to think of such a sight.

Ah, Scotland ! it is yet to come, thy darkest hour of night !"

Whilst the words were trembling on his lips, a startled look he cast,
As if the rustling of a wing had o'er his body passed :
He raised him on the bed, with strength which time had little
marred,

Like a rock whose sides the winter storms and mountain streams
have scarred.

Like Elijah on the mount he sat, and turned an earnest ear,
As hearkening to the still small voice whose whisp'ring floated
near :

With utterance chok'd, yet stern, he spake, and his eye with
splendour glistened,

And Renwick trembled as he gazed, then bowed his head and
listened:

“ A bloody sword ! a bloody sword !
Forged and furbish'd by the Lord !
For thee, O Scotland ! 'tis unsheathed,
From the martyr'd saints bequeathed !

“ Many a weary mile and day
Shall ye walk in Galloway,
By the Nith and by the Clyde,
Through Ayr's borders far and wide,
And never see a chimney smoke,
Never hear the crowing cock,
But behold the desolation
That must fall upon this nation !



“ Many a sweet conventicle,
In the glen and on the hill,
Hast thou had, O sinful land !
But another is at hand
That shall shake thee from thy day-dream !
Many a sermon, like the May-beam
Precious seasons, gracious dealings,
Holy, heavenly soul-revealings,
Have in by-past time been thine ;
God hath preached in love divine :
But because thou hast abhorred
The Law and Covenant of the Lord,
He shall preach by fire and sword !

“ Darker shades begin to thicken,
And the tyrant’s rage shall quicken,
And the Church shall reel and stagger,
As hollow friends and cowards drag her.
From the west sea-bank to the east sea-bank,
Horseman prance and sabres clank ;
And not a gleam from sun or star
To tell the wanderers where they are !
The vain and false ones shall disown
Christ’s sole kingly crown and throne ;
He shall be again denied,
And afresh be crucified,

And for a season He shall lie
Buried ignominiously.
But the stone shall be rolled back,
And his winding-sheet shall crack,
And he shall rise, the Mighty One !
And His crown be as the sun,
Shining o'er His gather'd host.
Not a jewel shall be lost,
Nor the golden ball be dim :
Praise and glory be to Him !

“ Then the Remnant shall come forth
From holes and caverns of the earth,
And Scotland’s widow’d Church look brave,
And a ‘ bonny bairn-time ’ have !
Her Maker shall her husband be,
And her second progeny
Outnumber and outstrip the first.
But this house of Cain, accurst,
Steeped in treachery and blood,
Freedom, like a rolling flood,
Shall sweep them hence for evermore
From the throne and from the shore.
Our Lord shall soon a feather twist
From the wing of Antichrist ;

And this York, that treads down all,
Like a wither'd leaf shall fall ;
And never shall a Stuart reign
In this ransom'd land again.

“ Times of trouble, times of fear !
People of the Lord, keep near,
By patient waiting, fervent prayer,
To the Lord, whose seal ye bear ;
For only praying folk can pass
Through all this storm and wretchedness !”

He sank forwearied, like a steed which at length hath reached
the goal,

His flesh too weak to bear the throes of that rapt prophetic soul :
Some moments as in swoon he lies, with strange low mutterings,
As one on whom the shadows press of dread unearthly things ;
But again he lifts his eyes that beam with a beatific grace,
And with a father's yearning heart he looks on Renwick's face.
“ Tis time we part ! Not far from hence the Slayer hath a den,
And I know the night-shades gather thick around old Blaxeden.

“ Rough is the path before thee, planted thick with thorns and
briers,
And a spirit, meek and fearless, and a wary step requires ;
And thy feet are soft and tender yet : but keep a constant eye
Unto thy Master's will, and thou shalt quit the stage with joy ;

While they who walk with stately step, and bend their necks in
pride,

Shall soil their garments, and be fain their squalid looks to hide.
Who trust in self are forth at sea in a frail and broken ship ;
Who build their Church upon the breath of a prince or cour-
tier's lip,

Are building on the shifting sand, or on the fleeting cloud,
And stand they may, so long as they are tools to serve the proud.
Trust thou for ever in the Lord ! for everlasting strength
Is in His arm, and He shall rise to plead thy cause at length !”
And he drew him nearer, and he placed his hand upon his head,
And, with a pause of inward prayer, these solemn words he said :
“ God be thy sun and shield ! Farewell ! And when we meet
again,

It will not be as now, my son, in peril and in pain !”

And slowly Renwick left the bed, his finger raised above,
The old man's eye still following him with looks and tears of
love !



PEDEN'S SHROUD.

**A TRADITION OF AUCHINLECK, WHERE HIS BODY WAS AT FIRST INTERRED,
ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1685.**

THEY drag the corpse from its place of rest,
And rend the shroud wherein it was drest,
And the bones of the saint, which were sealed in the tomb,
Are in mockery raised for a traitor's doom.
The shroud, borne aloft on the wings of the blast,
Around a plane-tree's branch is cast ;
And from that hour until this day
That branch hath withered and died away !

A hundred springs are past and gone,
And sixty more since then have flown ;
Whilst wood and vale with beauty teem,
By Lugar's sweetly winding stream,
When all is fresh and green around,
No bud upon that branch is found.

Blacken'd and bare,
With its point in the air,
Fixed it remains
As in dumb despair :

Nor sun, nor wind, nor dewy cloud,
Can loosen the curse of Peden's shroud !

TRIAL AND DEATH OF ROBERT BAILLIE OF JERVIESWOODE.

'TWAS when December's darkening scowl the face of heaven
o'ercast,

And vile men high in place were more unpitying than the blast,
Before their grim tribunal's front, firm and undaunted stood
That patriot chief of high renown, the noble JERVIESWOODE.

The hand of death is on him pressed, the seal of death is there!
Oh ! the savage of the wilderness those weak old limbs would
spare !

Frail, frail his step, and bent his frame, and ye may plainly trace
The shadow of death's wing upon his pale and sunken face.
These twenty long and dreary months in the dungeon he hath
lain,

Long days of sickness, weary nights of languishing and pain ;
For him no gale hath breathed its balm, no sun hath blessed
the year,
No friendly hand to smooth his couch, nor friendly voice to cheer;

His lady, in their lonely hall, doth mournful vigils keep,
And where he sat and where he walked his children watch and
weep.

Yet o'er his weakness and decay an ancient grandeur falls,
Like the majesty that lingers round some mouldering palace
walls ;

The light of calm and noble thoughts is bright within his eye,
And, purged of earthly taint, his soul prepares to mount on high.
Nor is he left alone, a sister faithful to him clung,
With woman's heart, with home-born love, with angel look and
tongue :

There in that Golgotha she sits, so tender, so benign,
Fair as the moon's sweet glimpses through the cloudy tempest
shine.

The court is met, the assize are set ; the robes of state look
brave,

Yet the proudest and the lordliest there is but a tyrant's slave ;
Blood-hirelings they who earn their pay by foul and treacherous
deeds,

For swift and fell the hound must be whom the hunter richly
feeds.

What though no act of wrong e'er stained the fame of JER-
VIESWOODE ?

Shall it protect him in those times that he is wise and good ?
So wise, so good, so loved of all, though weak and worn with care,

Though death comes fast, he is the last whom Antichrist would
spare !

For his the bold and freeborn mind, the wisdom of a sage,
The glow of youth still cherished in the sober breast of age ;
The soul of chivalry is his, and honour pure from stain,
A heart that beats for liberty, and spurns each galling chain,
Whether entwined by hands that bear the crosier or the sword ;
For he would see all nations free in Christ who is their Lord.

And once, with England's patriot-band, by tyrant power
oppressed,

He had dreamed of free and happy homes in the forests of the
West,

To breathe the uncorrupted air, to tread the fresh green sod,
And where the broad Savannah rolls, in peace to worship God !
These are his crimes ! the treason this for which he now is
tried,

But though the forms of law are kept, all justice is denied.

Woe ! that a land so favoured once should witness such disgrace !
Shame ! that a land so powerful yet should brook a scene so
base !

Unroll your parchments black with lies, shut fast your coward
doors ;

And brand the aged chief with crimes his generous heart abhors :
When truth avails not, well you know how to supply the lack,
With secret tales, and with wild words extorted by the rack !

There is an hour for every power, an hour of darkness this !
Spur on, ye slaves of Antichrist ! or ye the goal may miss !

His strength increasing with his need, he raises bold and high,
And fixes on Mackenzie base his clear and searching eye :
“ How canst thou thus, my lord, 'gainst me such accusation
bring,

That I have been a man of strife, in plots against the king ?
I hate the way of violence, the anarchist I spurn ;
Who scatters firebrands little knows where they may fall and
burn.

In my degree I have been bold to guard the nation's right,
And keep alive within these realms the lamp of Gospel light :
But, in my gloomy dungeon laid, didst thou not visit me,
And solemnly avow that I from wicked plots was free ?
How canst thou, then, unto my charge such grievous actions lay,
And all thou hast so solemn said as solemnly unsay ?”

The whole assembled multitude full on Mackenzie turned,
That even his hardened countenance with shame and anger
burned :

“ True, JERVIESWOODE, I told thee so as my own private view :
Here I discharge the functions which to the Crown are due.”

“ If thou hast a conscience for thyself, and another for this
place,

I leave thee to the God of heaven and His all-pardoning grace !

My lords, I add no more, proceed, right well I know my
doom;
Death hath no terrors for my soul, the grave it hath no gloom!"

"Tis one from old Saint Giles! the blasts of midnight shake
the hall,

Hoarse sounding like a demon's voice, which the stoutest hearts
appal.

His doom is uttered. "Twelve hours hence thy traitorous
head shall fall,

And for a terror be exposed upon the city wall;

Thy limbs shall quartered be, and hung, all mutilate and bare,
At Jedburgh and Lanark town, at Glasgow and at Ayr:

That all good subjects thence may learn obedience to the State,
Their duty to our gracious king, and bloody treason's fate."

A horror seizes every breast, a stifled cry of dread,

"Who sheds the blood of innocence, the blood on his own head!"

That packed and perjured jury shrink in conscience-struck
dismay,

And wish their hands as clean of guilt as they were yesterday;

Mackenzie's cold and flinty face is quivering like a leaf,

Whilst with quick and throbbing finger he turns o'er and o'er
his brief;

And the misnamed judges vainly try their rankling thoughts to
hide,

Beneath an outward painted mask of loftiness and pride.

Even she, the sweet heroic one ! aye watchful at his side
Whose courage ne'er hath blanched as yet, though sorely, sharply
tried,
Even she is crushed beneath the weight of this last and deadly
blow,
And sinks upon her brother's neck, o'erwhelmed in speechless
woe.

He, he alone, is calm of soul ! Powers of no mortal birth
Are gently loosening every tie that links him to the earth ;
And inward faith gives outward force, strong is his deep dark
eye,
And his brow and lip are beautiful as in the days gone by.
Meekly he rises to depart, but pauses for a space
And looks upon his cowering foes with calm and saintly grace :
" The time is short, the sentence sharp ; your malice I forgive ;
For God hath made me fit to die, as ye, my lords, to live ! "

And meekly he departs, his toils, his work and warfare done,
And his martyr-chariot waits him, and his triumphs are begun.

And twelve hours thence, upon the block, his reverend head
did fall,
And for a terror was exposed upon the city wall ;

His limbs were quartered, and were hung, all mutilate and bare,
At Jedburgh and Lanark town, at Glasgow and at Ayr :
And thus through all broad Scotland these martyred relics go,
Like a fiery cross to rouse the land to the tyrant's overthrow.

The ancient halls of Jervieswoode are desolate and grey,
And its ancient oaks and lime trees are sinking in decay ;
These are of things that perish, and their place soon knows
them not,
But a glory from the past illumes this consecrated spot :
To him who braves the martyr's death is deathless honour
given,
For the faith that breeds heroic deeds is dear to earth and
heaven ;
And through all succeeding ages, amongst the wise and good,
Enshrined shall be the memory of the noble JERVIESWOODE !



THE MARTYR OF PRIESTHILL

Time—The First Morning of May, 1685.

SCENE I.—Interior of the Cottage of Priesthill ; Early dawn ; John Brown and his family engaged in their morning devotions ; His family, consisting of his wife, by a second marriage, whose maiden name was Isabella Weir ; his daughter Janet, about ten years of age, by his first marriage ; and an infant boy by the second.

They sing part of Psalm xxvii.—

“ Against me though an host encamp,
My heart yet fearless is :
Though war against me rise, I will
Be confident in this.

One thing I of the Lord desired,
And will seek to obtain,
That all days of my life I may
Within God’s house remain ;

That I the beauty of the Lord
Behold may and admire,
And that I in his holy place
May rev’rently inquire.”

He then reads in the gospel of John, chapter xvi., in which the following passages occur :—

“ These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues : Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever

killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

After offering up a solemn and memorable prayer, he rises, blesses his family, and goes out with his implements of labour.

SCENE II.—The Heights to the west of Lesmahagow; Claverhouse, at the head of three troops of dragoons, and attended by Cannon, the spy, who has undertaken to betray Brown.

CLAVERHOUSE. Another vile, misty morning. May-day, too! May-day in Ayrshire! Certainly this Ayrshire is a great breeder of Whigs and mists, very suitable companions. (*Turning to the Spy*). We shall catch the weasel, though?

CANNON. No doubt of it, sir. His wife, who takes me for one of the brotherhood, told me he was to steal home this morning from his hiding in the moors. But, may I beseech

you, sir, spare his life ! If he were not crazed by conventicles, he is a good, innocent man, that would not do an act of wrong or violence to gain the whole world. In one way and another, he has been friend to almost everybody from Clyde to Ayr's mouth. When my own wife and children were lying ill in one bed—

CLAVERHOUSE. Peace, chattering booby ! I have let you talk so far, because I like to know what edge my tools have got. Hark ye, sirrah ! I keep two pistols in my belt, one for Whig vermin, the other for such ill-dipt rascals as you. Beware ! Soldiers ! see that you are charged. We're on the Ayrshire moors, and belike may start a covey of psalm-singers in some of the hollows.

SCENE III.—The high moor ground overtopping Priesthill ; Cairntable Hill rising straight opposite ; Brown occupied in casting turf for fuel, but often stopping from working, and looking around him, and upwards, in an earnest and meditative manner.

In a glen in the same moorland, but at some little distance, and unseen, a number of the young men and women of the surrounding hamlets are supposed to have met together, to hold the old revels of "May Morning."

BROWN. Again the earth, waked from her wintry trance,
Starts up with looks of promise and of joy.
All nature is alive, all life is fresh
With youthful brightness and a new-felt power.
Copy, tho' faint, not utterly defaced,

Of that first glorious birth and spring of being,
When on the shapeless mass the Spirit of God
Moved, and brought forth a world all good, all fair.

Down from the mountains gently come the winds,
The plains beneath open their breasts to meet them :
The mist, which erewhile hung upon the morn,
Veiling its extreme loveliness, disparts ;
And bird and beast to one great song of praise
Are all attuned.

"Tis the First Morn of May !

(*A pause.*)

And there thou look'st abroad, Cairntable ! watching
As with a hunter's eye the growing light ;
While the Sun paws the orient clouds, impatient
To run his mighty race. Into thy bosom,
Swelling with vernal impulse, dost thou draw
The fatness and rich influence of the morn,
For nourishment of all thy founts and streams,
And all thy herds, and manifold sweet creatures
To whom thou art a nurse, yea, and a mother.
And yonder (dearest, loveliest sight of all !),
Deep in the hollow of the valley, like
The lark's nest in the wilderness, peeps forth
Mine own beloved home ! lightly the smoke

Curls on the morning breeze, where Isabel,
God's richest earthly gift to me, attends
Her household and her household duties, with
A care no less than Martha's, yet is not
Like her world-cumber'd, but the better part,
Like holier Mary, hath she wisely chosen.
Methinks I see my little Janet skipping
About the door, blitheſt of children ſhe!
Yet never thoughtleſs in her merriment,
Prudent already as a housewife, and
A help and meet companion to her mother.

(*A pause.*)

O wife! O children! can I give you up?
Most precious are ye to me; never man
Yearned with more fondness o'er his home of love.
Myſelf of ſilent ſpirit, in them I found
A centre, and perpetual stored-up fountain
For all the gushing fulneſs of my heart.
Too much of idols have they been, too much
Have come between me and the Sovereign Lord.
Yet merciful as sovereign, blessed Saviour!
Forgive this frailty, ſubjugate this paſſion,
And make mine earth-affections ſtoop in awe,
And, even as bondmaids, to their heavenly miſtress
In deep and all-resigning homaſe bow.

And verily the hour of trial comes !
The blast already ruffles in the branches ;
I hear its fatal singing.

Tho' 'tis May-day,
And bud and sap around me, yet I know
That not with me 'tis May-day.

"Tis at hand,
The withering tempest that will strip my home,
Not the abode as now of simple joys,
But house of death and mourning ! I am warned
By the times and seasons. In the cave and dungeon,
On scaffold and on highway and lone moor,
And hard-fought battle-field, one after one
My brethren perish. I am also warned
By inward tokens and foreshadowings,
By presages and burdens from without.
But yestermorn, when Peden left the dwelling,
(Whose sore, wayfaring feet turned for a night
To seek short respite underneath our roof),
Thrice did he press poor Isabel's hand and groaned,
His eyes with sorrow more than age, bedimmed,
" Alas, poor thing ! a dark, a misty morning !"
'Tis seldom now he speaks. His heart is dumb
Beneath the visitation of the Lord.
In desert paths he wanders, and all night
Derns in the clifty rock, sleepless, and wrestling



For the remnant of the people!

Yes! I know
Mine end is near: we must be hunted down.
And now, Lord! I am ready to be offered:
My times are in Thine hand, so is my strength;
Through suffering make me perfect!

Sweet the ties
That bind me to the earth; but greater still
The voice that calls me on!

(*Noise as of shouting and singing heard at a distance.*)

What strange and startling noise is this which breaks
Upon the desert solitude!

(*Noise continues, and voices heard singing confusedly.*)

MAY-SONG.

“Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
Dance it merrily, dance it merrily!”

Alas!

Now I remember; 'tis an heathenish custom
Amongst the village youth to celebrate
The first May-morning with wild dance and song;
Dark relic of old Pagan revelries.
For many bygone years, whilst in this land
Flourished a pure and gospel ministry,
This baneful weed was all but rooted out.
Since Antichrist again hath raised his horn,

These secret, poisonous seeds are springing up:
 As blight or mildew in one night may rot
 What a long fertile spring hath richly nourished.
 And they that would enslave the human soul,
 And turn to their base ends the powers of man,
 Must first corrupt before they fetter.

Wise

And uncorrupted spirits brook no chain!

O sinful, woeful land! where half thy children
 Cain-like destroy the other, or but mock
 Their dying groans, and dance upon their graves:
 Where God's poor flock are slaughtered all day long,
 And no account is taken, save in heaven!
 But know, the axe is laid at thy vile root,
 And thou shalt be hewn down, with stroke on stroke.

(The voices become louder, and seem approaching nearer, singing in a rough and boisterous manner.)

MAY SONG—*continued.*

“ Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
 Dance it merrily, dance it merrily!
 They that mourn when buds are born,
 Will certainly die in December.

Maids and shepherds! fresh and young,
 Light of heel and blythe of tongue,
 Ere lamb has leapt or lark has sung,
 Merrily keep the May-day

Who can tell what may hap to-morrow ?
Who would couple youth and sorrow ?
Then come and range the green woods thorough :
Merrily keep the May-day !

Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
Dance it merrily, dance it merrily !
They that mourn when buds are born,
Will certainly die in December.

The curate sits at the alehouse door,
And benison gives to the wild uproar,
Mess John was not so jolly of yore :
Merrily keep the May-day !
Troubles there be by land and sea,
Things are not as they used to be :
But—Youth and May !—ho, what care we ?
Merrily keep the May-day !

Round the thorn on the sweet May-morn,
Dance it merrily, dance it merrily !
They that mourn when buds are born,
Will certainly die in December !”

(The voices suddenly stop ; in a few moments a shout is heard : “The troopers ! the troopers !” and the multitude rush down the slopes dispersedly. Claverhouse marches up with his troops, who surround Brown.)

SCENE IV.—Same part of the moor ; the troops surrounding Brown ; Claverhouse rides up to him.

CLAVERHOUSE. Your name is John Brown of Priesthill ?
BROWN. It is.

CLAVERHOUSE. Pray for the king.

BROWN. Prayer is like the gales of heaven, which come not at man's bidding, but when and how the Spirit of God determineth. I neither feel call of duty, nor inward motion, to pray for the man whom thou callest king.

CLAVERHOUSE. The *man* indeed! manifest traitor that you are.

BROWN. I am no traitor. I owe James Stuart no allegiance. Unto me the tyrant and antichristian cannot be king, although by force of circumstances he may have usurped the throne of the land wherein I dwell.

CLAVERHOUSE. Enough, brood of Satan! What punishment were sufficient for such a villainous rebel? You have sealed your own doom; you shall die within a few minutes.

BROWN. So be it as to God seemeth meet! But mark me: I am no rebel, even against the lawless and unchristian authorities of the time. I have had no light to join in active resistance as many have done. Besides mine own calling as a shepherd and tiller of the ground, a sense of duty hath led me only to teach, instruct, and admonish the young, and to minister such comforts as mine own experience enabled me to the sick and dying. Thus have I humbly sought to do my generation-work in the Church and commonwealth. Beyond this cirele have I never walked; and though willing and rejoicing to die, if it be God's time, and for His honour, I protest that I die not for rebellion, confusion, bloodshed, or any violent act.



CLAVERHOUSE. I come to execute sentence of death, not to hear a morning lecture. I shall be better to you than you deserve, and allow you to go down and see your family before you suffer punishment for your proclaimed and obstinate treason. Soldiers ! advance with the prisoner.

SCENE V.—Cottage of Priesthill ; little Janet, who has been at the door, runs in to her mother in great terror.

LITTLE JANET. O mother ! mother ! what a troop of soldiers Are coming down, and father in the midst !

ISABEL. 'Tis come, the thing that I so long have feared : Oh for the grace to grapple with this hour !

(*Takes up the infant from the cradle.*)

My boy ! my boy ! my fatherless !——

(*Rushes out with the infant in her arm, and leading Janet by the hand.*)

SCENE VI.—Bank before the cottage ; Brown in front of the troops ; Claverhouse near him ; his wife and children come forward.

BROWN. Isabel ! this is the day I speake of,
When in thy father's house at Sorn I sought
Thy hand in marriage.
I told thee then what now is come to pass !
You see me summoned shortly to appear



Before the Court of Heaven : another witness,
With testimony sealed in mine own blood,
Against the rulers of this land. The call
Is instant. I must take the yawning pass
Even at a bound : brief time for leave-taking,
Or for the weighty and the solemn things
Which the departing spirit fain would say.
Isabel ! (*looks at her with great anxiety*)
Art thou then willing that we part ?

ISABEL (*taking him by the hand, and raising both their hands towards heaven*)—

Jesus ! look down,
Behold thine handmaid offers unto Thee
This priceless jewel of her life, beyond
All reckoning rich and dear !

BROWN. Then, Answerer of Prayers, my voice is heard !
This, this is all I wait for. Not a cloud
Or speck hangs on my parting hour, but bright
As May's first sun, the path before me shines.

CLAVERHOUSE. Go to thy prayers : the morning wears apace.

BROWN. I thank thee that thou dost not cut me off,
As thy authority might well avouch,
Even at one sweep ; but giv'st me time for prayer,
That I may gird my loins and trim my lamp,
Ere I go down into the darksome vale :
The vale of shadows called, but pathway rather

Unto the only true realities :
Where shadow broods no more nor any darkness,
But all things have their end, and God shines forth,
Final and manifest in all His works !

CANNON (*aside*). Most wonderful, that he of such reserved
And maiden bashful ways, who always shrank
From strangers and great throngs of people,
And from a constant lowness of mind,
Did stammer in his speech, speaks now with boldness,
And with a ready and commanding utterance,
As if he were the general of these troops,
Not their poor prisoner—and woe's me ! my victim !
Angels are near, his ministering servants :
Whilst I, sold to the devil ! feel through my brain,
And through my limbs, a freezing dizziness,
As if a curse were cleaving to my bones.

Could I undo
The fatal knot which yesternight I twisted !
Or that the earth would crush me, ne'er to rise !

BROWN (*who has been standing for some time in silent
thought, kneels down to pray. His wife and children
kneel beside him*)—

“ Eternal One ! Holy and Ever-blessed !
Inhabiting the high and holy place !
Who with Thy glory fillest earth and heaven,
And holdest all things in Thine infinite hand,

And rulest all by Thine almighty will !
Angels and men, creatures and substances
In every place and state, are but Thy servants,
And at Thy bidding move, or are at rest.
All living things are Thine. The dying also
And the dead are Thine.

“ Father of mercies :

God of all comfort ! unto Thee I come !
To Thee in mine extremity I come !
To Thee my closing eyes look up ! To Thee
My soul, about to quit this tabernacle,
And pass into the far and unknown path,
Lifts up its supplications ere it flies !
For Thou alone canst guide me through this gloom,
Where creature unto creature can no more
Give help or passage !

“ Unto Thee I come :

And rest upon Thy promises, and take
Thee as my covenant God in Christ. All hope,
All other refuge I disclaim, and cling
With simple faith unto the uplifted Cross !
Hide not Thy countenance, nor take away
Thy Holy Spirit, promised Comforter,
Eternal Dove from the Redeeming Ark,
Bearing the olive-branch to drowning souls,
And tidings that the flood is overpast !

“ Oh, may the death
Which now awaits me, as a mustard-seed,
Small in itself, and weak, nursed by Thy grace,
Spring in due season from beneath the clod,
And bud, and cast forth fruit, though but an handful,
In honour of Thy blessed name and cause !
And, Lord ! Thy Church and people in this land,
Oh, visit them, and listen to their cry !
Build up our Zion’s walls, and on her towers
Be Thou the glory ! ”

CLAVERHOUSE. Tush with thy babbling ! thou hadst leave to
pray,
But not to preach. Done with thy sermonising !

BROWN. Thou knowest not what preaching is, or prayer,
If this thou callest preaching.

Bear with me
For a short space. My tongue shall soon be sealed
In silence of the dead, never again
To jar upon thine ear, or any man’s.
Then suffer me, thus called so suddenly,
Before the great tribunal, here to spread,
In mine own way, though barbarous unto thee,
My supplications and my wrestling thoughts
Before the Lord who is to be my Judge,
In whom I also trust as my Redeemer.
Mine is the great part in this morning’s work ;

Bear with me, for my soul is in its throes,
And in the travail of the immortal birth!

CLAVERHOUSE. Death and ten thousand furies ! dost thou
play

Conventicler with me ? (*Aside.*) The soldiers melt ;
This praying must be stopped. You three in front,
File out, and instantly despatch the prisoner !

(*The soldiers do not move or obey the order.*)

BROWN. (*Still kneeling.*)

“ O Son of Man, who stand’st at the right hand
Of God ! rend Thou the heavens, come down. Receive
My parting spirit, which now is lost in love,
In beatific love ! Amen ! Amen !”

(*Rises and goes forward to his family.*)

Isabel, farewell ! Thou know’st where comfort is :
One in the Lord, an higher union waits us !
My sweet, unconscious, smiling babe ! one kiss ! (*Kisses him.*)
In malice be a babe, a man in Christ !
My daughter ! be thou faithful to thy mother,
As thou hast ever been, and serve the Lord :
As thy years ripen, may thy graces grow !

(*He hangs over them and weeps, then suddenly checks
himself, and walks apart.*)

Blessed, O Holy Spirit, be Thou ! that speak’st
More comfort to my heart than speaks the voice
Of my oppressors’ terror to my ears.

1ST SOLDIER. (*In a low broken voice.*)

'Tis work for butchers this, and not for soldiers.
I'd sooner dip my hands in burning brimstone,
Than in such innocent blood. My conscience stings me.

SOLDIERS. (*A murmur through the whole troops.*)

So say we all.

CLAVERHOUSE. What, curs! vile mongrels! do ye whinge,
and cower,
And change your colour at a Whiggish rant,
At old sing-songs learn'd at conventicles?
(*Aside.*) What! knitting their brows! upon the very verge
Of mutiny! 'tis time to end this business.

(*Draws a large pistol from his belt, and presents it at Brown.*)

Die in thy folly, rebel! peasant slave!

(*Fires; Brown instantly falls; his wife, with a piercing shriek, falls upon the body; the troops hurry off, with horror depicted upon their countenances; Claverhouse remains, looking on the scene with affected indifference and contempt.*)

CLAVERHOUSE. Woman! what think'st thou of thy husband
now?

ISABEL. (*Raising herself from the body.*)

Much did I always think of him, but more
Than ever now, when, from an humble state,

The Lord hath chosen him to be a witness,
Even unto death, for His own cause and kingdom.

CLAVERHOUSE. 'Twere a good deed to lay thee by his side.

ISABEL. And so thou wouldest, were it permitted thee!
But canst not do what hath not been decreed.
But you! how will you answer for this work?

CLAVERHOUSE. To man I'll answer; as for God, I'll take Him
Into mine own hand. So much for gossip!

*(Claverhouse rides off; the widow wraps her plaid over
the mangled body, gathers her children around her
and sits down and weeps. A short time having
elapsed, there arrives on the spot old Christian Steel,
from the Cummerhead, "that singular godly and
Christian woman," who comes up to the mourners
and throws her arms around them.)*

CHRISTIAN. O Isabel! and is thy master taken,
And from thy head removed this day? and hath
He won the martyr's crown, which ever shines
The brightest mid the diadems of heaven?
And hath the Lord espoused thee to Himself,
Adopting all thy children? In one day,
How great the loss, but greater the exchange!
No wonder that thou sittest on the ground,
Gazing on earth and heaven, and telling them,
"See what the Lord hath wrought! Holy His name!"

Arise, my daughter! and dry up thy tears.

(Raising her, and still keeping her arms around her.)

Enough of lamentation for the dead,

Whose death hath been a triumph, and whose triumph

Shall never fade. Enough of lamentation!

But for a moment hath the Lord forsaken,

With tenderest mercies will He gather thee.

Arise, my daughter! my fair children, rise!

Large is your need, but Grace hath large supplies.

Deeply the creature yearneth, but not more

Than may be filled at heaven's unbounded store.

This cottage henceforth shall a Bethel be,
An angel spot, which men will come to see
From the far lands, and as they see will say,
“ The just man’s memory passeth not away!”
The Martyr of Priesthill shall be a name,
In cloudiest times, to kindle Scotland’s flame.
A sample of her ancient chosen seed,
Stedfast to truth, and strong in word and deed.
He lived by faith, and faith lived in its fruit,
The harvest showed the richness of the root:
His soul serene in Nature’s dying strife,
Faithful to death, he won the crown of Life!”

MEETING OF GENERAL DALZIEL AND CAPTAIN
JOHN PATON OF MEADOWHEAD,

WHEN THE LATTER WAS BROUGHT PRISONER TO EDINBURGH, AUGUST, 1684.

HATH his good sword her temper lost,
Or her master now forsaken ?
Or why, such wars and dangers passed,
Is he a captive taken ?
Nay, nay ! his arm is powerful yet,
His sword as keen as ever ;
But he is life-worn, and would fain
That God should him deliver.

The same that won his maiden scars
At Lutzen, famed in story ;
And since, in every hard campaign,
Hath shared the toil and glory.
But chiefly to his native land
His heart and sword were given ;
That she might keep her ancient rights
And her covenant with heaven.

DALZIEL AND CAPTAIN PATON.

21

And still his frame is knit like brass,
Age passes gently o'er it,
As loath to touch the stately pile :
Alas ! who shall restore it ?
And still his adamantine step
Sounds like the charger prancing :
The troopers shrink as he looks round,
With eyes like an eagle's glancing.
Oh, had he roused his ancient strength,
He'd given these kites to slaughter,
Until the swamps about Lochgoin
Had run with blood like water !

But death, familiar to his thoughts,
With no dark shadow haunts him ;
And, strong and valiant in his mind,
No earthly suffering daunts him.
Nor his the merely brutal strength,
That like the whirlwind sweepeth,
But when his work and warfare end,
Calm as a dove he sleepeth.
And he surrenders patiently
To those who come to snare him :
When, fast as horses feet can tramp,
To Edinburgh town they bear him.

22

And now they skirt Corstorphine Hill,
With August blossoms merry :
When by the way Dalziel rides forth,
To see what spoils they carry.

His grizzled beard falls down his breast,
Like a knot of scorpions twisted ;
His flinty brow with harshness scowls,
And violence unresisted.

Like fire from the blacksmith's forge, his eye
Glares forth with lawless fury :
Woe worth the land, where such a man
Is general, judge, and jury !

Yet, albeit bred in savage deeds,
His heart's blood all congealing,
One touch of kindness lingers there :
The true old soldier's feeling.
When he beheld amid his band,
Old Paton wearily wending,
Unwonted pity lit his face,
A glow to his grey cheek lending.

Down from his coal-black steed he leaps,
The aged prisoner meeting,
And takes him kindly in his arms :
A right old veteran's greeting.

“ O John ! had we but sooner met,
These pinions had not bound thee ;
But I shall sue, and 'twill go hard
If pardon be not found thee.”

“ Thy suit will be in vain : my life
Though scantily worth the taking,
Must go to feed an ancient feud,
Long years of vengeance slaking.
Thou, General, hast the soldier's touch,
The soldier's mind and mettle ;
But I am in the bishop's clutch,
Not on the field of battle.”
“ What, sayst thou so ? I'll save thy life :
Or, if they dare refuse it,
I'll fling my sword down in the mire,
For slaves that like to use it.”

’Twas then a vile, obsequious groom
Came up his zeal to blazon :
“ Ha, Paton ! art thou caught at last,
Thou spawn of Whiggish treason ?”
“ Friend, stint thy speech ! I've served the king,
More true and tried than thou art :
Time was my sword and life were pawns
For the royal House of Stuart.”

“True, my old comrade ! thou wert first
Wherever duty called thee :
At Wor’ster, where the game was lost,
No dangers e’er appalled thee.
There for the king thy blood was shed,
Thy sword was fell and ready ;
And in all changes thou hast been
A soldier tried and steady.
Let house-dogs whine and gnaw their bone,
Snug-kennelled from the weather ;
Our jaws were set where the war-dogs met,
And we lapped red blood together.
Since then in hostile camps we’ve fought,
Each would have slain the other ;
Yet now in thee I only see
A soldier and a brother ! ”

Then round he turned, all black in the face,
His beard as stiff as brambles,
And his staff came whack ! on the varlet’s back,
Till he rolled like an ox in the shambles.
“Lie there, false loon ! and cool thy tongue,
This noble foe decrying :
One whiff of his sword would send ten like thee
As summer-gnats a-flying ! ”

They parted, these two hoary chiefs :
 Dalziel's request was granted,
But treacherous fingers came between,
 And the act of grace prevented.

Old Paton dies with a soldier's heart,
 With a martyr's high devotion ;
Rests from his labours and his woes,
 From war and wild commotion.

Dalziel lives on : this one bright act
 His dark career to chequer,
As the stormy sky one ray darts forth,
 Then thicker glooms and thicker.

Guilt sears his conscience : festering lust
 His dotard heart debases :
Till, at the sumptuous banquet set,
 While splendour round him blazes,
In a moment dead he falls like lead,
 As the wine to his lip he raises !



THE DOVE AND THE RUIN.

TRAVELLER.

O DOVE ! that charmest the stream and grove, is this fit haunt
for thee ?

The walls are blackening into dust, the chambers foul to see :
No cowslip peeps beneath the bush, no lark salutes the morn ;
Spring quickens not the plane tree's leaf, nor swells the budding
thorn.

Oh, hie thee to the Almond banks, where beeches stately grow ;
For there thy wing may sweetly rest, thy murmurs sweetly flow.
This spot is waste and desolate, and leaf and blade are sear ;
Then why, O tender, warbling dove ! why art thou resting here ?

DOVE.

Slight no spot in this beautiful earth,
Crumbling tower, or desert wild ;
For Nature, which hath given them birth,
Bestows fit dower on every child.
Love makes lovely all she looks on,
And flow'rets spring where she glides along ;
Ruins smile and deserts blossom,
And branchless thickets fill with song.

From confusion order wakes,
After midnight morning breaks :
This spot is drear, the leaves all sear,
Yet I, the Bird of Love, am here.

TRAVELLER.

The curse of rapine stamps decay on buttress, arch, and wall,
The earth around is barrenness, whereon no dews may fall ;
The spoiler of the saints is spoiled, his heritage laid bare,
And all is blackness now where he, the bloodhound, had his lair.
The blight may fail to strip the flower, the lightning lose its aim,
But vengeance from the Lord shall blast the persecutor's name.
This spot is waste and desolate, and leaf and blade are sear ;
Then why, O gentle-hearted dove ! why art thou resting here ?

DOVE.

When for the crown and the covenant
Scotland's faithful remnant stood,
And Antichrist did hotly pant
To glut his maw in the elect's blood,
O'er the moorland tracked by foemen,
In torturing cell, on gallows tree,
Peace hung o'er them, heaven before them
And death but gave them victory.
When the bloodhound held this den,
Weakest things had strengthening then !

This spot is drear, the leaves all sear,
Yet I, the Bird of Peace, am here !

TRAVELLER.

But what avails heroic strife ? the crown of glory won ?
The father's creed is ridiculed by his degenerate son ;
The burning martyr-words of faith are laughed at with disdain,
He sealed the covenant with his blood, his blood is shed in vain.
To endless struggles, baffled hopes, our weary lot is fixed ;
The victory that one age proclaims is still undone the next ;
And prostrate in inglorious dust our aspirations lie ;
'Tis better that we eat and drink, to-morrow we must die !

DOVE.

If thou hadst faith like a mustard-seed,
Couldst thou tremble thus aghast ?
The clouds may shift, but the sun shines through,
And tempests rage, but the earth stands fast.
Symbols wane, the truths rekindle
With fuel fresh and wider spread :
Old oppressions stir ; but valour,
By ages stronger, strikes them dead.
Forward, forward rolls the war !
Triumphs beckon from afar !
This spot is drear, the leaves all sear,
Yet I, the Bird of Faith, am here.

JOHN KNOX ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT
AT CALDER HOUSE,

IN THE EARLY PART OF SPRING, 1556.

THE howling winter winds have passed, and spring steps forth
again

To shed her first sweet gifts abroad, on mountain, stream, and
plain;

And freshly bud the Calder woods, the Almond freshly gleams,
And hails with gurgling, fond delight, the sun's returning beams.

Another spring approaches, too, though faint and dim its power;
The **MAN** hath come, John Knox hath come, but scarcely yet
the **Hour**;

For Scotland must be fiercely struck, and rent with breach on
breach,

Before the spring of Heavenly Truth her darken'd soul can reach.

Yet great and chosen ones there are, of counsel deep and wise,
Who soon for truth and liberty in stemless force shall rise;

And fast the Worthies of the land are gathering, staunch and true;

The men who ne'er resolve a thing but their right hands will do.
This day, in Calder's ancient hall, a faithful few have met,
And round the Table of their Lord a brother band are set.

In that same ancient stately hall high festivals have been,
And antique rites, and pageantry, and gorgeous pomps, I ween;
And barons bold, and ladies bright, in rich array have shone,
And dreaded conclaves have been held by the proud Knights
of Saint John.

A noble concourse once again to that same hall repair,
And barons bold and ladies bright again assemble there;
But not for pomp or dalliance vain, far other is their aim,
Their Christian Faith and Liberty with one voice to proclaim.

And, mingling with the noblest, sit the lowly village youth,
And hoary sires and matrons new-begotten to the Truth;
While some sweet cottage children there, with little twittering
tongue,
Point to the antlers and the spears that round the wall are hung.
The stranger in the gates is there, the minstrel blind and grey,
Whose heart is smitten with the sound of the high celestial lay,
"Glory be unto God on high, and peace be on the earth,
To men goodwill," as angels sang at great Immanuel's birth!

All sit, one family of love, within that stately hall :
Vain man hath made divisions, but God is the God of all !

And Knox is in the midst of them, long driven to and fro ;
He comes their trusted counsellor, their guide in weal and woe,
The great Apostle of the North, Reformer of his land,
Which to its latest days shall bear the broad marks of his hand.

But not this day with levin-words to shatter and consume ;
He comes with influence as of spring, to cherish and illume :
His message peace, and love his theme, not as it yet shall be,
When his patriot soul shall burst and roll, like tempest on the sea.

That eagle-glancing eye looks soft, and on that brow so stern
A glow of solemn tenderness ye plainly may discern ;
That fiery heart, which yet shall stir the nation to its base,
Itself is melted in the flame of pure Redeeming Grace.

“ O ye that hunger, hither come, and plenteously be fed !
The fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him whose feast is spread.
In truth and spirit worship Him, no other service bring ;
A broken and a contrite heart be all your offering.
No table this of sorcery, no idol Mass is here,
No sacerdotal mummery to rouse the vulgar fear :
These are the symbols of the Death which raised our fallen race ;
Salvation to this house hath come ; believe, receive, embrace !

I break the bread, I pour the wine, even for His own Name's sake:
Come ye unto the banquet room, and of His grace partake!"

He breaks the bread, he pours the wine ; in fervent prayer they
bend,

That the Holy Spirit in His power may on their feast descend ;
Then silently from hand to hand the bread and wine are passed,
Till all have owned their dying Lord, from the first unto the last.

Oh ! how bright on roof and cornice do the golden sunbeams lie,
As if gazing down upon them, each one a seraph's eye !

A deep and blessed stillness doth through all the chamber creep,
As when the stars of midnight lay this heart-sick world to sleep.

On that assembly falls a fear, but with the fear a joy,
And pious vows and songs of praise their raptured tongues
employ ;

A sacred influence fills their hearts, a light, and strength, and
love,

Are winnow'd on them from the wings of the brooding Holy Dove.
'Tis thus the graces signified flow through the outward sign,
And the Human, in its flights of faith, half soars to the Divine !



ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

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ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

THE DEATH OF ARCHIBALD, FIRST MARQUIS OF ARGYLE.

ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, the eighth Earl, and first Marquis of Argyle, was, in his time, the most distinguished and patriotic of Scottish noblemen. Having received an excellent religious education, he was eminent during his whole life for his attachment to Protestantism, and especially to the Presbyterian Church of his native country. He attended the famous Reforming General Assembly of Glasgow in 1638, and took an important part in its deliberations. But, attached to monarchy, and the family of the Stuarts, he upheld the cause of Charles II. after the death of his father Charles I., and actually put the crown on the head of the young king when, in 1651, he was acknowledged at Scone by a large proportion of the Presbyterian party as the true heir to the throne of the three kingdoms. But, on his restoration in 1660, Charles utterly forgot the services rendered to him and his cause by Argyle; and when that nobleman came up to London to congratulate the King on his return, he was committed to the Tower, and immediately afterwards sent down by sea to Scotland to be tried for high treason. The chief charge against him was his having virtually acknowledged the Government of Cromwell. The whole circumstances of his trial show that his death was determined upon by the King and the Court, who were resolved to restore Episcopacy in Scotland, and thought it necessary to begin by striking down the head of the Presbyterian interest. The execution of Argyle was thus in reality a judicial murder.

This nobleman was considered deficient in some of the warlike qualities of his renowned race, and certainly he was more of a statesman than a

warrior ; but no patriot or Christian martyr ever met death with greater heroism. The story of his last hours and his deportment on the scaffold is wonderfully touching. The depth of his Christian principles and the fine nobility of his nature were evidenced by his whole conduct at the time of his trial and up to the moment of his execution. He was the first victim of the black ingratitude of Charles II. and the persecuting tyranny of the Government of the Restoration. He was soon succeeded in the career of martyrdom by Guthrie and a noble army whose names still shine with undimmed lustre in the annals of Scotland.

DEATH OF JAMES GUTHRIE.

THIS distinguished martyr was the son of the Laird of Guthrie, the representative of an ancient Forfarshire family. Educated for the ministry, James Guthrie, as soon as he was ordained, took a very high place among his brethren as a preacher of the Gospel, and a zealous defender of the rights of the Church of Scotland. He was a man of high talents, and spotless character, no less eminent for his candour and prudence than for his burning zeal in the service of his Divine Master. He was appointed minister of Lauder in 1638, and was translated to Stirling in 1649. He took a leading part in the councils of the Covenanters. Soon after the Restoration of Charles II., in 1660, he was marked out for vengeance by the Court party. He was accordingly tried and condemned for high treason at Edinburgh. He received his sentence with perfect equanimity, and was executed on the 1st June, 1661. His death, like that of Argyle, had all the features of a judicial murder. As he was among the first, so certainly he was one of the noblest of the Scottish Covenanting martyrs.

SHARPE OFFERING A BISHOPRIC TO ROBERT DOUGLAS, OCTOBER, 1661.

ROBERT DOUGLAS, a man of honourable birth, and said to be even of royal extraction, was an eminent minister during at least twenty years before the Restoration, and was frequently selected to preach in presence of the Scottish Parliament. He had served in his youth under Gustavus



Adolphus, and had gained the friendship of that great Protestant hero. Mr. Douglas was a patriotic and zealous Presbyterian, and was among the first to detect and denounce the treachery of James Sharpe who had long been his friend. The incident of his rejection of an offered bishopric is well authenticated, and agrees with what is known of his lofty and disinterested character. Sharpe, a native of Banff, born in 1613, studied for the Presbyterian ministry, and after teaching philosophy for a short time at St. Andrews, was appointed to the parish of Crail, Fifeshire. He soon took a prominent part in the management of Church affairs, and when Monk marched to London to restore Charles II., he was sent to that General as an agent of the Scottish Presbyterians. But instead of defending the cause of Presbyterianism, he basely betrayed it, conformed to Episcopacy, and accepted as his reward the Archbishopric of St. Andrews, at that time the Primacy of Scotland.

THE CHRISTIAN EXILE.

ALEXANDER SMITH was, previous to the Restoration, minister of Colvend, lying on the Solway. By the Act 1662, he was, with many hundreds of his brethren, ejected from his charge. Still continuing the exercise of his ministry, which was then a crime, he was summoned before the High Commission Court. Sharpe was present; and Smith, in speaking to him merely styled him *Sir*. On being asked by the Earl of Rothes if he knew whom he was addressing, he replied, with a simplicity more pungent than the most laboured satire, "Yes, my Lord: I speak to Mr. James Sharpe, once a fellow-minister with myself." Chiefly, it may be supposed, for this heinous offence, he was banished to the Shetland Islands. "For four years," says Wodrow, "he lived alone in a wild desolate island, in a very miserable plight; he had nothing but barley for his bread, and his fuel to prepare, it was sea-tangle and wrack, and he had no more to preserve his miserable life." He was recalled, only to be again banished to the Orkneys; and, no further trace remaining of him, it may be concluded that he there fell a sacrifice, at once to the rage of his persecutors and his own lofty and devoted heroism.

The poem is an attempt to bring out something of that struggle of emotions, natural to one in his situation, and to evince the triumph of

faith which he so gloriously achieved. Criffel is a lofty mountain in Galloway, commanding a splendid view of the Solway Firth. Urr is a river that issues from a loch of the same name, and falls into the firth near the small island of Heston.

BATTLE-SONG OF THE PENTLANDS, AND DIRGE OVER THE SLAIN.

THE Battle of the Pentlands was fought on the side of a ridge called Rullion Green, in 1664, between a party of armed Covenanters under Colonel Wallace, and a superior force of Royal troops commanded by General Dalziel. The Covenanters, mostly men from the West of Scotland, had taken up arms in defence of what they considered their national and constitutional liberties; but, fatigued by exhausting marches, and over-powered by numbers, they were defeated after making a brave resistance. About fifty of them were killed, but many more were taken prisoners, and dragged into Edinburgh, where they were punished with merciless severity.

DEATH OF THE AGED COVENANTER.

AMONGST the four hundred Presbyterian ministers who, about the year 1663, gave up or were ejected from their livings, on account of their refusal to conform to Episcopacy, was Arthur Murray, an aged minister of Orkney. "This good and aged man," says Wodrow, "was living in the suburbs of Edinburgh, through which Dalziel's soldiers marched in triumph, on their return from the battle of the Pentlands. When he opened his window, and saw them display their banners, and heard the shouts of the soldiers, triumphing over the prisoners, he was struck to the very heart, took to his bed immediately, and died in a day or two."

BATTLE OF AIRSMOSS.

AIRSMOSS, in the parish of Auchenleck, Ayrshire, was the scene of a celebrated battle fought between a considerable body of Royalist troops

under the command of Bruce of Earlshall, and a small but determined body of Covenanters, headed by Richard Cameron and Hackston of Rathillet. Many of the Royalists fell, but the Covenanters were over-powered by superior numbers. Cameron was found among the slain, and Hackston, being severely wounded, was taken prisoner, and carried to Edinburgh, where he was put to death with revolting barbarity.

**CARGILL TAKEN PRISONER AT COVINGTON MILL, ON
THE CLYDE, JULY, 1681.**

DONALD CARGILL, born about the year 1610, in the parish of Rattray, Perthshire, was one of the ministers of Glasgow at the period of the Restoration ; but stoutly resisting the introduction of Prelacy, and maintaining the rights of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, he was deprived of his office by the Government. He became, in consequence, a field-preacher and a leading spirit among the persecuted Covenanters. He had certainly the courage of his opinions, for after preaching to a large congregation at Torwood, a place between Stirling and Falkirk, he openly pronounced sentence of excommunication against the King and the Duke of York, the Dukes of Monmouth, Lauderdale, and Rothes, Sir George Mackenzie, and Sir Thomas Dalziel of Binns. This act of defiance specially incensed the Government, and every effort was made by it to apprehend the undaunted Presbyterian minister. Its vengeance was at length gratified by the apprehension of Cargill near Lanark, through the activity of Irving, the laird of Bonshaw, Dumfriesshire, who commanded a troop of horse in the Royal service. Cargill was immediately condemned in Edinburgh, and was executed the day after his condemnation. Though he went such lengths in resisting a tyrannical government, this martyr is described by his contemporaries as a man of singular devoutness and exemplary life, not naturally of a bold and imperious, but rather of a mild and amiable temper.

RENWICK IN THE COTTAGE OF JOHN BROWN.

JAMES RENWICK, the last of the Covenanting Martyrs, was born in the parish of Glencairn, Dumfriesshire, in 1662. He witnessed the execution

of Donald Cargill, and was confirmed by it in his resolution to support the Covenanting cause. He studied at the University of Edinburgh, but was denied a degree, as he could not take the oath of allegiance. He went, in consequence, to the University of Groningen, in Holland, where he completed his theological studies, and was ordained as a minister of the Gospel. Returning to his native land, he took an active part in guiding the counsels and conduct of his persecuted brethren. He was apprehended in Edinburgh in the beginning of the year 1688, and condemned by the High Court of Justiciary to suffer death as a traitor. His execution was delayed a few days after the ordinary time that he might have the opportunity of suing for a pardon, which probably would have been granted to him on easy terms. But, in the true spirit of a martyr, Renwick refused to act against his conscientious view of duty, and preferred death to what he considered dishonour. He was only twenty-six years of age when he died in the cause of religion. He is described as being of small stature, light haired, and of a somewhat boyish appearance. His dauntless heart gave no ruggedness to his character. On the contrary, he was mild in manner, and usually addressed his audiences in the language of sweet persuasion. The quotation from Graham's "Sabbath" is well known—

“ The lyart veteran heard the Word of God,
By Cameron thundered, or by Renwick poured
In gentle streams.”

RENWICK'S VISIT TO THE DEATH-BED OF PEDEN.

ALEXANDER PEDEN is a unique character in the history of the Scottish Covenanters. His fervent piety was combined with a certain eccentricity and spiritual exaltation that gave him a peculiar influence among his fellow-religionists. He was a native of Sorn, in Ayrshire, and, shortly before the Restoration, he was ordained a minister at New Luce, in Galloway. He was allowed to remain in his parish only three years, owing to the tyranny of the Government, which he had offended by his bold avowal of true Presbyterian principles. After preaching his last sermon to his sorrowing flock, he left his pulpit, and thereupon struck its closed door three times with his Bible, saying, “ I arrest thee in my Master's name, that none ever enter thee but such as come in by the door as I have

done." These words were prophetic, for none ever entered that pulpit during the stormy times that followed ; and, after the Revolution, it was occupied by a true Presbyterian. The wanderings, the hardships, the escapes, the faithful contendings, and strange prophetic sayings of this sturdy son of the Covenant are enough to fill an interesting volume, and have, in various works of a more or less authentic character, been strikingly recorded. The reconciliation between Alexander Peden and James Renwick is a fine passage in the lives of both these worthies. Peden had been misinformed about certain points of Renwick's character and conduct, and when he was near his death he sent for his young brother that he might have an interview with him. Renwick answered the call at once, and soon the two men understood each other entirely. Peden gave Renwick his blessing, and sent him away with many prayers for his welfare. Soon after, the aged confessor, wearied with toils, and daily in danger of his life, entered into his rest. His body, after it had been buried forty days, was dragged out of its grave and dishonoured by a troop of dragoons ; but it was finally deposited beside the remains of other martyrs at Cumnock, in his native Ayrshire.

TRIAL AND DEATH OF ROBERT BAILLIE OF JERVIESWOODE.

ROBERT BAILLIE OF JERVIESWOODE, Lanarkshire, in respect of his character, abilities, and martyrdom, has been called the Scottish Sydney. A country gentleman by birth, and possessed of a highly-cultivated mind, he took a leading part in defending the liberties of his country, so grossly violated by the Government under which he lived. After suffering for a considerable time a most cruel and unjust imprisonment, that brought him to the brink of the grave, he was tried on the 23rd December, 1684, before the Court of Justiciary, for conspiring against the life of the king. The utmost that could be proved against him was a desire for more just and lenient measures on the part of the Government, not for the subversion of the Government itself. But after a trial that was commenced at midnight and lasted till nine next morning, he was condemned to be hanged and quartered as a traitor, and the sentence was carried out *only a few hours* after it was pronounced. This noble gentleman, thus judicially murdered, met his death with sublime Christian fortitude. His heroic sister, Lady

Graden, attended him on the scaffold, and soothed him with her presence in his last moments. Bishop Burnet, Dr. Owen, and other eminent persons have borne ample testimony to the lofty character and high intellect of the martyred Baillie of Jervieswoode, whose name and memory are inexpressibly dear to all true-hearted Scottish Presbyterians.

THE MARTYR OF PRIESTHILL.

JOHN BROWN, the Christian carrier of Priesthill, in the parish of Muirkirk, Ayrshire, deservedly occupies a high place in the martyr-roll of Scottish Covenanters. He was shot by Claverhouse at his own door, in presence of his wife and children. The hardened troopers were so melted by Brown's prayer, offered up in the expectation of immediate death, that they refused to fire upon him at the word of command, whereupon their commander himself shot his victim through the head with his own hand. The interview between Brown and his wife before they were parted by death, and the conduct of the poor woman in composing and weeping over her husband's mangled remains, are among the most pathetic things in all history. The character of Brown, both in life and at death, shone forth with the highest lustre ; while the act of Claverhouse, in killing him so brutally, is universally execrated.

MEETING OF GENERAL DALZIEL AND CAPTAIN JOHN PATON OF MEADOWHEAD.

CAPTAIN JOHN PATON, of Meadowhead, Ayrshire, holds an honourable place in Covenanting history. Trained in his youth to the profession of arms, he held a military command both at the Pentlands and at Bothwell Brig. He ardently upheld the cause of the Covenant, and distinguished himself by his consistent Christian character, and excellent soldierly qualities. He was apprehended in April, 1684, and executed for high treason the 9th of May following. He confessed at his trial the charges brought against him, but held that he was justified in bearing arms against a government which had forfeited all claim to the allegiance of the

Scottish people. He died with great fortitude, forgiving all his enemies, and committing his wife and six children to "the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless."

His meeting with General Dalziel, in the circumstances described in the poem, was a touching incident that shed a beam of light on the darkness of an evil time. The feeling of old comradeship displayed by Dalziel on the occasion is creditable to a man who has few other claims to the respect of his countrymen. Thomas Dalziel, of Binns, Linlithgowshire, was a cavalier officer of the Claverhouse stamp, rough, unscrupulous, and ready to do the work demanded of him by a tyrannical government. It was he who defeated the Covenanters at the Pentlands; and for a considerable time he was commander of the Royal forces in Scotland. He died in his house at Binns, at Michaelmas, 1685, not much more than a year after the execution of his old comrade Paton.

THE DOVE AND THE RUIN.

IN an excursion in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, the writer had occasion to pass an old ruined tower, which, in former days, was the seat of one who gained unenviable distinction as a ready and unscrupulous tool in the persecution of the Scottish Covenanters. On entering the doorway to examine the ruin, a dove was observed nestling near the roof. The place, and the well-known emblematic character of this favourite of the groves, suggested the poem.

[The tower mentioned is understood to be the tower of Binns, in Linlithgowshire, once the residence of General Dalziel, a man of such evil repute in the days of the great persecution.]

JOHN KNOX ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT AT CALDER HOUSE.

THIS Poem, which appeared first in "Drawing-Room Table Book," edited by the late Mr. C. Hall, is now by permission reprinted in this volume. It refers not to the Covenanting period of Scottish history, but its subject and spirit are such as to make it worthy to appear beside the Lays of the Covenanters.

Calder House, Mid-Lothian, was in the time of Knox the residence of Sir James Sandilands, who in 1563 was created Lord ~~Appleton~~. He had previously been head of the order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in Scotland. This dignity, with the ceremonials it involved, is gracefully alluded to in the Poem. Sir James was one of the strongest supporters of the Reformation, and was a warm personal friend of Knox. At Calder House, the great Reformer met the Earl of Argyle, Lord James Stuart, afterwards Earl of Murray, and other powerful supporters of the Reformed religion.



